

CONSTRUCTED SITUATIONS

socialising a sculptural practice

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Abstract

Through a series of large-scale installations, this project has sought to challenge and reactivate the established logic and institution of the gallery. The installations consisted of constructed interventions comprising abstracted spatial conventions. Focussing on physical aspects of specific gallery spaces, the works aimed to provoke audience members to reassess their physical and psychological positions in relation to the use, history and context of gallery situations. The interrogation of diverse gallery spaces then determined a series of liminal environments in which autonomous sculptural objects and installations were made to exist in dialogue.

The project built upon the historical legacy of Minimalism, and took up strategies drawn from the Conceptual Art movement, specifically the work of Sol Lewitt, Bruce Nauman and Michael Asher. Hal Foster's essay *The Crux of Minimalism* (1996) framed the initial research, while works by contemporary artists Elmgreen and Dragset, Monika Sosnowska, and Oscar Tuazon served as contextual references.

In the course of developing the project, spatial experiments were contingent on the sites in which they were conducted, and the works employed key architectural forms: threshold, corridor, pathway and wedge. Vernacular building conventions and materials were used to limit and highlight the constructions' familiar elements and to subvert the austerity of the minimal objects. Characteristics from the built environment were brought into play: customary signifiers of public and private such as actual and perceived barriers, control of movement through lighting and floor covering variations, and lines of sight. These characteristics were engaged to mediate viewers' behaviour, their awareness and relationship to the exhibition space they occupied and, by extension, the constructed environments external to it.

Geographer Doreen Massey's writing on the interrelation between space and the political was used as a lens through which to understand links between space, time, human movement and the construction of spatial relations. The main theoretical context for the spatial and social aspects of this research is Henri Lefebvre's theorisation of spatial production, in particular his triad of perceived/conceived/lived spaces, and Jacques Rancière's notion of 'the distribution of the sensible', a 'politics of aesthetics' that governs the form of the established social order.

In focussing on, and mutating relations between viewer, object, and space, this project has addressed and extended the inquiry of object relations into an interrogation of spatial conventions and their capacity to have impact on, and determine, the social order of the gallery. Through its constructed spatial devices, developed in collaboration with conventions governing exhibition spaces, this project has sought to deliver an object lesson in the redistribution of the sensible.

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This research project is dedicated to my soon to be born child, whose immanent arrival provided the impetus to tie up the loose ends and bring this project to completion.

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Introduction

I am interested in work where the artist is a maker of 'anti-environment'.

Richard Serra¹

This practice-led research project began with the premise that space is created by those who inhabit it. The premise was tested through a series of exhibitions that were spatial experiments and which appropriated directly from artworks of the late modernist period, specifically the 1960s through to the late 1970s.² I utilised the appropriations of late modernist tropes from movements such as Minimalism, Institutional Critique, Conceptual, and Performance Art as operations or operants – rather like actors – within my constructions, much like Duchamp's 'Readymades'. I intended that the installation works would demonstrate the way constructed spaces are created and how structures can be socialised within a gallery setting. In framing my aims, I drew upon Henri Lefebvre's writing, in which he describes the spatial politics inherent whenever there are interrelations within an environment, such as between the artwork, the viewer and the space.³

The works made during this candidature exhibit some late modernist tropes, to reference a crisis point in which a long held belief in the autonomy of the art object ceased to be an article of unquestionable faith. The autonomous art object was linked to the trajectory of modernity by the staunch formalist of the post World War Two era, Clement Greenberg, amongst others. Greenberg proclaimed that modernist art developed by making its own rules and was governed by its own internal logic. In reaction to the formalist paradigm, many artists of the late modernist period rethought the relevance

¹ Serra, Richard, "From the Yale Lecture", originally published in *Kunst & Museumjournal*, Amsterdam, vol.1, no. 6, 1990. Cited in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of*

² This period of art production provided the starting point for the project, as modernist art then underwent a crisis where essentialist agendas gave way to a multiplicity of media and methods. From this point contemporary forms of art practice have proliferated.

³ Lefebvre, Henri, *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991

of the object relations of art to institutions and audiences, and dispensed with the autonomy of the object in favour of making work reliant on context within space. Institutional Critique emerged out of such concerns as a way of regaining the autonomy of art through a negation of the economic systems of the art world.⁴ It is an aim of this project to show that an aspect of this shift was the re-positioning of the art object as the material of the gallery. Installation, performance art and conceptual works fit within the scope of this proposition.

During the latter part of the twentieth century many artists gave prime consideration to the space in which their work was sited and the viewer's relation to the object within the space. Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* (1981) is an example of the way in which an artwork can implicate the viewer within its environment, however, as this work was sited in public space, it had ramifications for a greater number of people than a work sited within a gallery.

Installed in the Foley Federal Plaza in front of the Jacob Javits Federal Building in New York, *Tilted Arc* was a solid, unfinished plate of Core-ten Steel thirty-six metres long and three and a half metres high. The work's position in the Plaza was such that it redirected the passage of the many people who used the Plaza as a thoroughfare, as they went about their daily business. The main criticism leveled at *Tilted Arc* was that it obstructed peoples' movement and posed a safety risk for the surrounding buildings and their occupants. The *Tilted Arc* controversy was a response to Serra's desire to create an object that controlled the area in which it was sited. In a lecture delivered soon after its removal, Serra said:

I think that if sculpture has any potential at all, it has the potential to work in contradiction to the places and spaces where it is created... You can't build a work in one context and indiscriminately place it in another. Portable objects moved from one place to another often fail for this reason.⁵

⁴ Lüticken, Sven, "Autonomy after the Fact." *Open* No. 23, *Autonomy* (2012): 207-21. p. 210

⁵ Serra, *op.cit*, p. 1099

In this sense, *Tilted Arc* operated as the artist intended and aroused a negative response to the extent that it was removed nine years after its installation. As an exercise in framing a space with an artwork, Serra's gesture succeeded in contradicting the use of the space to a high degree. *Tilted Arc* and the controversy it sparked demonstrated a collision of the politics of space and aesthetics.



Fig. 1: Richard Serra, *Tilted Arc*, 1981-89. Installation view

Although the work of the Minimalists has often been attributed as having initiated the shift in emphasis of the artwork to spatiality, it was the artists associated with Institutional Critique who brought the space of the gallery into the frame and defined the viewer as participant. For the work *Claire Copley Gallery, Los Angeles, California, September 21-October 12, 1974* (1974) Michael Asher removed a wall within the gallery, exposing the office space where the everyday business of the gallery was undertaken. The removal of this wall opened to the viewer the often hidden structures of the gallery's administrative systems. Asher stated, '...this work laid bare the contradictions inherent in the gallery structure and its constituent elements'⁶.

⁶ Asher, Michael, and B. H. D. Buchloh. *Writings 1973-1983 on Works 1969-1979*. Halifax, N.S.: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles, 1983, p. 96



Fig. 2: Michael Asher, *Claire Copley Gallery*, Los Angeles, California, September 21-October 12, 1974, 1974. Installation view

In analysing what is at stake in spatial politics I have applied the political theories of Jacques Rancière. In writing about the ‘distribution of the sensible’, Rancière posits that politics is at the heart of what is perceived within a given situation, which is governed by the structures that are inherent to it: politicized perception or sensibility to space ‘defines the common within a community, [and] introduces into it new subjects and objects, to render visible what had not been’⁷. Rancière’s ideas can be applied to the aforementioned work by Michael Asher: the *Claire Copley Gallery* work. Here, Asher shows the viewer what they already know exists within the gallery structure, and provides an experience that includes their participation, thus providing the viewer with a deepened, experientially-based understanding of the given situation.⁸

By utilising aspects of Institutional Critique as Readymades, the works made during the candidature focused on the formal qualities of the art object within the gallery in relation to the viewer. It is Rancière’s definition of the ‘distribution of the sensible’ that informed this process:

⁷ Rancière, Jacques, *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*. English ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009, p. 24-5

⁸ Peltomäki, Kirsi, and Michael Asher. *Situation Aesthetics: The Work of Michael Asher*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010, p. 13

The 'distribution of the sensible'...produces a system of self-evident facts of perception based on the set horizons and modalities of what is visible and audible as well as what can be said, thought, made or done.⁹

It should be noted that for Rancière there is a distinction between the politics of aesthetics (or art) and the political: the former has the ability to transform perceptions while the latter pertains to the struggle of a collective subject. The political aspect of the work produced during this project follows Rancière's definition of the political as that of dissensus. For Rancière, the political confronts the established order of identification and classification, and by challenging the natural order of a given situation can thereby reconfigure the distribution of the sensible.

The works made during this candidature drew upon, and mobilised these ideas about the power of spatial sensibility to create a variety of gallery-based environments designed to elicit the viewer's participation in diverse ways. The categories of constructed situations viewers encountered were somewhere between 'nominal' and 'directed' participation, distinguished by Pablo Helguera in his book *Education for Socially Engaged Art*.¹⁰

In this sense, the works operated as guides or barriers, in which the viewer is passive or active to different degrees. This is not truly 'directed' participation in the sense that Helguera applies it, as the action the viewer completes occurs within the confines of the space of the work. The works functioned to manipulate viewers' actions, as they entered and negotiated the space, so the viewers were made to complete the logic of the work, and in this sense echoed an architectural paradigm.

⁹ Rancière, Jacques. *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*. London: Continuum, 2004. p. 85

¹⁰ Helguera describes 'nominal' participation as, 'the visitor or viewer contemplates the work in a reflective manner, in passive detachment that is nonetheless a form of participation' and 'directed' participation as, 'the visitor completes a simple task to contribute to the creation of the work'. See, Helguera, Pablo, *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*. New York: Jorge Pinto Books, 2011, p. 14-15

The installation works explicitly incorporated aspects of Conceptual Art practices, such as the re-interpretation of previous artworks, the interrogation of established gallery practices, and the socio-spatial qualities of architecture. In the re-interpretation of these attributes, the project designated a space between art and architecture; a fertile ground through which to re-negotiate ways the art object could become a function of the gallery space and viewer.

The works created during the course of the candidature exhibit an architectural uncertainty, where the boundaries of a work are unclear in relation to the space it inhabits. Part art object, architectural intervention and/or obstruction, the visual clues as to how the works function and how they are read, are ambiguous. These points of contention undermine the way space is understood in relation to function, negotiation and design, and lead to an uncertainty of encounter. The situational nature of these environments were deliberately designed to prompt participants to reassess their relation to the art object, as they were forced into a bodily encounter with the object, and were implicitly involved in an element of the work.

Structure of the Exegesis

The exegesis is divided into three parts. The first offers an outline of the project, the second provides descriptions of the works made during the course of the project, and the third, a conclusion. The exegesis is a chronological account of the way the project was conducted and, therefore, emphasises the practice-led nature of the research.

Part one provides an overview of the research encompassing the historical precedents and legacies of the artistic movements and theories that this project extends upon. The project fits broadly within the legacy of Marcel Duchamp's Readymades. However, the historical movements of most

relevance are those of the late 1960s and '70s, particularly Minimalism, Conceptual Art and Institutional Critique. Artists associated with these movements abandoned the formalist pre-occupation with medium specificity and embraced the dematerialisation of art. They also addressed the viewer as an integral part of the artwork. In sympathy with the phenomenological theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the Minimalists were interested in the 'presence [of the body]... lead[ing] to a new concern with perception, that is, to a new concern with the subject'.¹¹

The second section of part one provides an analysis of the spatial theories that contributed to the conceptual premise of the project: the re-distribution of the aesthetic principles that govern exhibition spaces and the built environment. Through the theories of the philosopher Henri Lefebvre and humanist geographer Doreen Massey, my research has encompassed the social production of space. By combining these perspectives with that of the political philosopher Jacques Rancière's conception of the 'distribution of the sensible', this project explores the possibility of a redistribution of aesthetics through a contemporary spatial practice. The third section is a contextual discussion based on contemporary artists working within similar fields of enquiry.

Part two offers a detailed description and analysis of the works that comprise the research project. Each work was developed for an exhibition, either in response to an invitation from a curator or through my own instigation. In seeking to extend the contingent relationship between the works and specific aspects of each space, I constructed the works in situ. Each work is discussed in terms of how it relates to the spatial theories and referenced works previously discussed. Each work is then presented as a developmental step in the thesis that describes the influence each work has on the succeeding work. In this way, the project develops as a process of

¹¹ Foster, Hal, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996, p. 43

accumulated spatial knowledge, each work contributing a different aspect or experience through its own physical and conceptual specificity.

Part three addresses the outcomes and conclusion of the project.

Part One: Outline and Central Argument

Historical Narratives

There is a sense in which the reductionism underpinning the promulgation of the art object, as well as subsequent moves to 'dematerialise' the object, can all be read as a continuation of, rather than a move beyond, Modernist essentialism. That is, it can be construed as a kind of ultimate Modernism, a striving to hitch the last, and hence, most up-to-date wagon, onto a train coming from history.

Charles Harrison and Paul Wood¹²

The history of modernism is intimately framed by [the gallery] space; or rather the history of modern art can be correlated with changes in that space and in the way we see it.

Brian O'Doherty,¹³

This project engaged the gallery space as medium, in order to create environments that mediated the viewer's movement through space and, in doing so, made the viewer aware of the volume they embody. In particular, I was interested in the extension of the body in space, in how space is created, the effect this has on the viewing of art, and the implications these aspects have for the production and reception of the artwork. Only in the past fifty years has space been considered as a medium within an art-making context. Until the 1960s, space had been the domain of architecture and geography. For those disciplines, space was often originally conceived as logical and planned, rather than lived. In architecture and geography, as well as in new forms of art practice, lived experience, the negotiation of space has come to the fore as a central concern. In combination these

¹² Harrison, Charles, and Wood, Paul, 'Introduction to Part VII: Institutions and Objections', in *Art in Theory, 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*. 2nd ed. Ed, Harrison, Charles, and Paul Wood. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2003. p. 814

¹³ O'Doherty, Brian. *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*. Expanded ed. Berkeley, Calif. ; London: University of California Press, 1999. p. 14

conceptions, which together bring viewer participation under consideration, drove the questioning underlying this project.

During the late Fifties and early Sixties, as a generation of emerging artists reacted to the established art of the Abstract Expressionists, art practice morphed from a binary of painting and sculpture towards a combination of the two, or as Donald Judd referred to his own work, as 'Specific Objects', works that resembled both painting and sculpture, but were neither.¹⁴ Here was an art that sought to dispense with being representational, and became just what it was; objects possessed of three dimensions, whether hung from a wall, or placed on the floor. The artists of this period considered how the viewer could engage with the work in the space, as opposed to being passive within the space. Minimalism was concerned with relations between object, viewer, and the space in which their confrontation took place. The works from this period consequently took the temporal dimension into account as part of the viewing experience. Michael Fried, in his essay from 1967, *Art and Objecthood* dismissed much of the works produced during this time by arguing they were too 'theatrical' in their staged encounters between viewers and objects.¹⁵

As artists continued to experiment with different ways of formulating what art could be, performance began to become more prevalent. From the Fluxus group came public gatherings, lectures and performances that recalled the activities of the Dadaists of the 1920s. Music, literature and theatre were also influenced by the ideas of Minimalism, embracing the logic and aesthetic of less is more. From this period the Conceptual Art movement evolved, with artists presenting ideas as work. Joseph Kosuth in his essay *Art after Philosophy* (1969) argued for the separation of aesthetics from art, as he saw no 'conceptual connection' between the two, a mistake

¹⁴ Judd, Donald, "Specific Objects", originally published in *Arts Yearbook*, 8, New York, 1965. Cited in Harrison and Wood, *op. cit.* p. 824

¹⁵ Fried, Michael, "Art and Objecthood", originally published in *Artforum* vol. 5 no.10, Summer 1967. Cited in, *Ibid.* p. 838

Kosuth says came from 'any branch of philosophy that dealt with beauty [being] duty bound to discuss art'¹⁶.

Through the work of the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, artists in the 60s began to address the space of the gallery as a distinctive element in their works. In his book, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), Merleau-Ponty focuses on human identity being informed by the physicality of our bodies and, consequently, the body's influence on our perception of the world. He writes,

every external perception is immediately synonymous with a certain perception of my body, just as every perception of my body is made explicit in the language of external perception.¹⁷

The artists associated with Minimalism took on such ideas to break from the historical constraints (as they perceived them) of Greenbergian Formalism. This break was the impetus for a new conceptual model that differed from that of the Abstract Expressionists. Judd commented that 'much of the motivation [was] to get clear of these forms'¹⁸ to become what author Hal Foster has described as the artistic crux of the late modernist period.¹⁹ Foster writes,

Paradoxically at [the] crux of the postwar period, ambitious art is marked by an expansion of historical allusion as well as by a reduction of actual content. Indeed, such art often invokes different, even incommensurate models, but less to act them out in a hysterical pastiche (as in much art in the 1980s) than to work them through a reflexive practice - to turn the very limitations of these models into a critical consciousness of history, artistic or otherwise.²⁰

Foster discussed Minimalism as the progenitor of much of the 'advanced' art of the '90s, which drove artistic progression from the late '60s till now.

¹⁶ Kosuth, Joseph. "Art after Philosophy", originally published in *Studio International*, London, vol.178, no. 915. Cited in *Ibid.* p. 854

¹⁷ Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Routledge Classics. London: Routledge, 2002, p. 239

¹⁸ Judd, *op. cit.* p. 824

¹⁹ Foster, *op. cit.* p. 36

²⁰ Foster, *Ibid.* p. 3

This position has influenced my approach to appropriation during the course of my candidature. In this context, the work executed for this project incorporates elements appropriated from the art of the '60s, not as homage, but as a way of subverting the formalism of this period. Having passed through the 1980s and '90s, a period where the historical narratives of Modernism were constantly in question, I believe, there is still much to be learned and gleaned from the Modernist period.²¹

Evidencing this is the proliferation of artists working in both aesthetic and conceptual ways that have been influenced by this period. Artists such as Mona Hatoum, Cornelia Parker and Rachael Whiteread use installation as a way of implicating the viewer within a phenomenological relationship with the object; a decidedly Minimalist device. Although Minimalism was derided for being reductive at the time of its genesis, Foster has subsequently argued that it was the reduction in form and consideration of the viewer's implication within a work of art that helped to expand the realm of Conceptual Art, thus leading to much of the leading art works created today.²²

A number of essays were written in the late 1970s that attempted to explain what had happened in the art world with the shift away from a strictly formalist sensibility, and the splitting of medium specific-art towards pluralism of medium and practice. Movements such as Conceptualism, Land Art, Performance Art and Institutional Critique came out of this period, all attempting a break from what was perceived as the old guard of structuralist driven art work, implicitly tied to Modernism. The multiplicity of

²¹ There are many different ways of re-theorising this period of time. Rancière for example dismisses postmodernism by arguing that what was perceived as the 'rupture' that incorporated life into art, has in fact always been there. See, Rancière, Jacques. *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*. English ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. p. 49. Other theories that challenge 'traditional' postmodernity include Zygmunt Bauman's conception of Liquid Modernity, see, Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 2000. Within an art context, Nicolas Bourriaud has conceived of Altermodernity, see, Bourriaud, Nicolas. *The Radicant*. New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2009.

²² Foster, *op. cit.* p. 36

form, medium and method of this time are the grounding for much of the multi-disciplinary artists' practices that have permeated the art world since the turn of the century. It is this shift in artistic thinking, making and production that led this project to focus on the essays of this period. As a consequence, it became necessary to intentionally highlight the thinking of the late modernist era in order to better understand the re-interpretation of the art of this period that is so prevalent today.²³

Two essays are of particular relevance to this research project. *Sculpture in the Expanded Field* (1979) by Rosalind Krauss and *Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of the Gallery Space* (1976) by Brian O'Doherty. These essays examine the work of the previous decade prior to their publication, discussing the spatial turn of the art produced during this time. Krauss' essay clearly defined what occurred in sculptural practice during the period from the early to late 1960s and into the '70s. Krauss explained how the artists of this period 'had entered a situation [where] the logical conditions... [could] no longer be described as modernist' and almost dismissively uses the term 'postmodernism' to describe this 'historical rupture', as there 'seem[ed] to be no reason not to use it'²⁴. Krauss' essay classified the different modes of display that had occurred in relation to sculpture over the previous years into four groups: sculpture, site-specific constructions, marked sites and axiomatic structures. It is the axiomatic structure, sitting somewhere between something architectural and something that is not, that is of most relevance to this project. Krauss describes these structures as 'mapping architectural space onto the reality of a given space', foregrounding what would later come to be known as installation.²⁵

²³ There has been much written on the subject of spatial practice since the late 1970s, however it is the intent of this project to focus on the point in history when these concepts first emerged, to better understand the logic of the shift from one paradigm to another.

²⁴ Krauss, Rosalind E. 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field', in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985. p. 287

²⁵ *Ibid.*

Krauss' conception of the expanded field highlighted the differences in production that occurred after the advent of Minimalism, pointing the way to a pluralist reading of art and art production. The expanded field has continued to develop, shifting the straight modernist reading of aesthetic and form, to encompass sociological readings such as race, gender, sexuality and the political, to increase the breadth of art production. Despite this expansion of form, there is still a tendency to historicise and re-evaluate the work of the 1960s and '70s within contemporary art. For the purposes of this project, I will focus on the use of space as a medium within the art of the past two decades. In particular, I will describe the relevance of Minimalism, and the ways in which the gallery has been framed and engaged as a site of contention in the context of art production.

In a series of three essays published in *Artforum* in 1976, and subsequently as the book *Inside the White Cube: the ideology of the gallery space*, Brian O'Doherty articulated the general malaise felt toward the art market and what it had become by the 1960s. The key premise running throughout the essay is the dissatisfaction with the art of the recent past, and the critique of those historical narratives. As O'Doherty explains '...as modernism gets older, context becomes content'.²⁶ His argument is framed by the white walls of the contemporary gallery space, and he elucidates the concerns of the artists of the day with a framing of their works by the gallery. For my project, what is most relevant about O'Doherty's argument is the way that he identifies that the gallery has historical context and as such is known as a container for art. As the primary site of display in the decades leading up to the 1960s, the gallery gave way to other options as awareness of site framed the multiplicity of new methods of display. From land art to lectures, performance to site-specific installations, the dematerialisation of the art object became the driving force for many contemporary artists. Although the works produced for this project follow this trajectory, rather than remove

²⁶ O'Doherty, *op. cit.* p. 14-15

the object altogether, as artists such as Kosuth advocated, this project re-positions the object to become the material of the gallery.

Artists such as Vito Acconci, Michael Asher and Daniel Buren (among others) instigated a form of practice that removed the art object from the confines of the gallery space (and even from artistic practice), critiquing the economic, historical and physical structures of the space that had become a repository for art. In what was seen as a break from the constraints of the Formalist compositions of painting and sculpture, these artists began to expand on the work of the Minimalists to critique the structures of artistic practice; from the studio (Daniel Buren) to the economic structures that maintain the art world (Michael Asher), to the viewer/object/space relationship (Vito Acconci).

Michael Asher's work, in particular, initiated the shift toward the critique of the gallery, with his use of the actual space and material of the gallery environment. Asher's experiential works developed through a desire to subvert the traditional distribution system of gallery to market and question the way this system dictated the content and context of the art being made.²⁷ Described as 'situational aesthetics', Asher's early works focussed on the experiential nature of the gallery experience, using elements from within the spaces he was working to question the autonomy of the art object in relation to the gallery space.²⁸ Asher's main mode of working was through commissions for specific spaces, and so following the conclusion of an exhibition, the work would cease to exist; he never re-made or re-translated a work for a different space.

²⁷ Asher, *op. cit.* p. 96-100

²⁸ Victor Burgin originally coined the term in an article written for *Studio International* in 1969 to describe art practices that were more attuned to the viewer's reactions than to a commodity based model. See, Burgin, Victor. "Situational Aesthetics", originally published in *Studio International*, vol.178, no.915, 1969. Cited in Harrison and Wood, *op. cit.* p. 894-896

Kirsi Peltomäki describes Asher's work as 'an articulate intervention' into Jacques Rancière's 'distribution of the sensible'.²⁹ By including the viewer's bodily experience, 'their social and cognitive senses', Peltomäki argues, '[Asher's work has] the potential to redistribute the boundaries between visible and invisible aspects of a given institution'³⁰. My project has a strong affinity with the 'boundary redistribution' aspect of Asher's oeuvre. By incorporating familiar building materials in unfamiliar situations, the viewer is caught in a spatial paradox; they understand the material and layout, however the function of the spaces created are thrown into question or are contentious. Through this unknown quantity, my works contribute to the 'redistribution' in specific relation to the spatial qualities of the gallery and built environment.

Asher's works are precedents for my project in the way they used the gallery's elements as context for the work, and mediated the institution of art as seen through the lens of the gallery/museum model. Whilst the work undertaken for this project incorporated the art historical nature of Asher's work, it also critiqued the architectural constructs that frame exhibition spaces. My project has not emulated Asher's strict mode of working; some projects have been re-made or re-imagined for quite different spaces. I see the work from this project informing a set of rules of construction, or methods of making, that can be translated from one space to another. Using elements from within the gallery, such as lighting, layout, sight lines and floor coverings I have manipulated these elements to focus on the viewer's movement through and consequently, engagement with, the space.

Much of this new work encompassed the space it was exhibited in. Benjamin H. D. Buchloh described in his essay, *Allegorical Procedures: Appropriation and Montage in Contemporary Art* (1982), how such work provides an 'analysis of the historical place and function of aesthetic

²⁹ Peltomäki, Kirsi, and Michael Asher. *Situation Aesthetics: The Work of Michael Asher*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010 p. 13

³⁰ *Ibid*

constructs within institutions.’³¹ With this in mind, the work from this period has been referenced throughout my installations. I approached my subject matter with a view to the past, and an understanding that what has come before does not have the same kind of power as when it was first created. This approach reiterates Buchloh’s discussion of appropriation through montage techniques within contemporary art, ‘the procedure of montage is one in which all allegorical principles are executed: appropriation and depletion of meaning, fragmentation and dialectical juxtaposition of fragments, and separation of signifier and signified’.³² Through the appropriation of works from this period their original intention is diminished, replaced and subverted by their use within a different context. Therefore it is not so much a critique of modernism that this project seeks to achieve, but rather an appropriation and subversion of modernist tropes.

By critiquing the historical canon of Institutional Critique through mundane construction methodologies within the space of the gallery, this project reactivates the dialogue between contemporary art and architecture. The structures made were finished in such a way as to draw the viewers’ attention to inconsistencies within the fabric of the gallery space. For example the works were not perfectly aligned within the space; there was always an element that made the work look ‘unfinished’, as if a handy-man had come at the last minute to erect a partition and failed to finish the joins with caulking. These ‘unfinished’ qualities are devices that serve to subvert the crisp aesthetic of Institutional Critique, a constructed statement designed to lead the viewer to question the motivations of the works. It is through this ‘challenge to the natural order’, that which is expected of Institutional Critique, that the ‘redistribution of the sensible’ becomes apparent within the work created for this project.

³¹ Buchloh, B. H. D. "Allegorical Procedures: Appropriation and Montage in Contemporary Art." *Artforum* XXI, no. 1 (1982), p. 48

³² *Ibid.* p. 44

Theoretical Context

Spatiality: a term that refers to how space and social relations are made through each other. That is, how space is made through social relations, and how social relations are shaped by the space in which they occur.

Hubbard, Kitchin and Valentine³³

The body of work produced aims to highlight the way manipulated space focuses the viewer's attention to complete the art/architecture binary that has been a feature of much of the art produced over the past four decades.³⁴ My project aimed to provide object lessons in the social production of space, as outlined in the writings of philosopher Henri Lefebvre, humanist geographer Doreen Massey and political philosopher Jacques Rancière. My project signals possibilities for the redistribution of aesthetics through installation practice.

In her book *For Space* (2009), Doreen Massey defines space as the product of interrelations, 'as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny'.³⁵ She argues that the space surrounding us is made up of interrelations, is in a constant state of flux, is always under construction and is therefore difficult to pin down. Massey describes space as 'a simultaneity of stories thus far'.³⁶ She proposes that recent shifts in progressive politics are relational in nature and mirror the social construction of space, stating 'space does not exist prior to identities/entities and their relations'.³⁷

Massey's 'politics of interrelations' is of particular relevance to this project for closely considering the gallery environment and interactions between viewer, space and art object as they began to be understood through

³³ Hubbard, P, Kitchin, R, Valentine, G. "Glossary." In *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, edited by P Hubbard, Kitchin, R, Valentine, G. 344-52. London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2004. p. 351

³⁴ Foster, Hal. *The Art-Architecture Complex*. London: Verso Books, 2011, p. vii

³⁵ Massey, Doreen, *On Space*, London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2009, p. 9

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.* p. 10

Minimalism. My project engages with the contemporary urban environment by incorporating common building materials and building techniques in each installation. Through their vernacular materials and structures, the assembled environments address the built spaces of homes, offices and institutions. Their air of familiarity leads the viewer to engage with the spaces, either through an art historical reference, or an understanding of the means or materials of construction, or both. The objects and environments speak of the fabric of the everyday, without being didactic in their expression. Each viewer will come to the work with a different history and understanding of space and spatial practice.

Lefebvre's book *The Production of Space* (1991) argues that space is not inert or neutral, but rather the product of social relations.³⁸ He proposes that space is made up of three arenas: perceived, conceived and lived. This triad of spatiality is in a constant state of flux, and creates the environs we inhabit. Lefebvre states, '...representations of space are shot through with a knowledge [...] which is always relative and in a state of change'.³⁹ His arguments distil to a diverse understanding of space that is contrary to the modernist ideal of a singular historical spatial reading and as such, can be understood as fundamental to postmodern theory. In keeping with Lefebvre's spatial triad, my project examines the politics of the art object by drawing attention to, and adjusting, interrelations between viewer, space and situation.

Lefebvre writes of the three spatial arenas as being at the heart of an historical reading of space. 'Perceived space' (spatial practice) is of everyday social life where rational perception blends popular action and outlook, this is a space that happens as life unfolds, not planned, or pre-conceived. Next is the conceptualised space of cartographers, urban planners, geographers and bureaucratic entities, those who need to analyse

³⁸ Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 41

space objectively. The 'conceived space' (representations of space) often 'tend[s] toward a system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs'.⁴⁰ The 'lived space' (representational space) for Lefebvre is associated with images and symbols, and as such is a described space of the imagination.⁴¹ This third space not only transcends, but also has the power to refigure the balance of popular 'perceived space' and official 'conceived space'.⁴² The 'representational space' for Lefebvre 'need obey no rules of consistency or cohesion', it is the space made up of historical symbols and imaginations, of the society as well as the individual. It is alive and temporal, 'it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic'.⁴³

My proposition is that the combination of these three spatial arenas allows the contemporary artist to address known spatial conventions within contemporary art and so contribute to what the French political philosopher Jacques Rancière calls 'the distribution of the sensible'. As set out in his book *Politics of Aesthetics* (2004), Rancière defines 'the distribution of the sensible' as:

...refer[ing] to the implicit law governing the sensible order that parcels out places and forms of participation in a common world by first establishing the modes of perception within which these are inscribed. The 'distribution of the sensible' thus produces a system of self-evident facts of perception based on the set horizons and modalities of what is visible and audible as well as what can be said, thought, made or done.⁴⁴

Using Rancière's definition, we can see that gallery space has a set of 'self-evident facts' that arose through the use of those spaces to exhibit contemporary art. Via a cross-disciplinary and at times interactive approach, this project questions the conventions of these spaces and examines the

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 39

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Hubbard, P, Kitchin, R, Valentine, G. "Henri Lefebvre." Chap. 31 In *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, edited by P Hubbard, Kitchin, R, Valentine, G. 208-13. London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2004. p. 210

⁴³ Lefebvre, *op. cit.* p. 42

⁴⁴ Rancière, *op. cit.* p. 85

‘implicit laws’ of the gallery as a mediated arena for spatial practice. In activating this exchange through the mundane nature of the construction methods used, this investigation allows the everyday viewer a ‘way in’ to an otherwise separate and privileged arena articulated by and through its own customs and language. By utilising a work site aesthetic, the works made during the course of the candidature contain aspects that are common to different contexts than those they are shown, thus providing a ‘way in’ to otherwise non-art educated viewers.

A brief description of Rancière’s logic, of what he terms the ‘aesthetic regime of art’, will frame the discussion of works created during this project in the following chapter. In the glossary to *The Politics of Aesthetics* Rancière describes the ‘regime of art [...] as a mode of articulation between three things: ways of doing, their corresponding forms of visibility, and ways of conceptualising both the former and the latter’.⁴⁵ Rancière provides detailed accounts of three separate regimes that appeared at different historical moments, and which still operate in various forms today.

The first regime is the ‘ethical regime of images’ ascribed to a Platonic distribution of images where ‘art is judged according to its utility in reflecting the collective ethos of a society or people’.⁴⁶ Art here was used as a means to divide the community in accordance with the proper distribution of occupations and so had little or no autonomy. The second regime is the ‘representative regime of art’ that came out of Aristotle’s critique of Plato by a ‘liberation from the moral, religious and social criteria of the ethical regime’⁴⁷ before it. The fine arts were separated from other techniques and modes of production and organised into hierarchies of genre and subject matter appropriate to particular forms of expression. In this period, roughly from the Renaissance through to the 18th century, art was maintained by

⁴⁵ Rancière, *op. cit.* p. 91

⁴⁶ Ross, Toni. "Material Thinking: The Aesthetic Philosophy of Jacques Rancière and the Design Art of Andrea Zittel." *Studies in Material Thinking* Vol. 1, no. 2 (2008). p. 4

⁴⁷ Rancière, *op. cit.* p. 91

‘rules regarding the correct matching of types of artistic expression with subjects represented, and the authorisation of subjects considered sufficiently dignified for artistic representation’⁴⁸.

The third artistic paradigm Rancière outlines is the ‘aesthetic regime of art’ that is most relevant today. At the heart of this regime is the idea of art’s autonomy from prescribed content or standard criteria, and its disruption of classical hierarchies of subject matter, form and style⁴⁹.

The aesthetic regime asserts the absolute singularity of art[...] It simultaneously establishes the autonomy of art and the identity of its forms with the forms that life uses to shape itself.⁵⁰

Rancière proposes that art in the aesthetic regime simultaneously differs from everyday distributions and enables the visibility of new ‘forms of being’. There is no specific realm for art in society, as in this context it inherently rejects the distribution of the sensible, thus creating a tension whereby alternative forms of production and activity are merged with art.⁵¹ Relational Aesthetics and Participatory Practices would fall into this particular realm, where the object of art is the inclusiveness of the concept.

Rancière ascribes this tension to the ‘two great politics of aesthetics: the becoming-life of art and the politics of the resistant form.’⁵² What is at stake in these two politics is in essence the negation of the finality of the modernist project that is implied by the term postmodern. Rancière describes the ‘becoming-life’ of art as the sort of work that resembles other forms of experience and so tends towards experiential and socially engaged forms of contemporary art, such as Relational Aesthetics. On the other hand, the second resistant form tends towards the separation of art from life

⁴⁸ Ross, *op. cit.* p. 5

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Rancière, *op. cit.* p. 23

⁵¹ Berrebi, Sophie. "Jacques Rancière: Aesthetics Is Politics ". *Art & Research: a Journal of Ideas, Contexts and Methods* Vol 2, no. 1, 2008. p. 2

⁵² Rancière, Jacques. *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*. English ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. p. 44

and so gains certainty from this very separation (concrete abstraction would fall under this umbrella). In considering this binary, Rancière argues the critical art of the 1960s was ‘not about negotiating between art and politics, but rather of finding a form that can exist in-between the two opposite aesthetics of politics’ and consequently ‘oscillates between legibility and illegibility, everydayness and radical strangeness’.⁵³

The work created for this project fits within this binary. It exists partly in the ‘becoming-life’ through the materials used and the interaction of the viewer within the space of the work, whilst succumbing to the separation from life of the ‘resistant form’ via the abstracted and at times absurd nature of the spaces created. An architectural formlessness permeates the works made for this project. The spaces created exist somewhere between functional space and its subversion, a zone between architecture and sculpture. In the later works, formlessness becomes more obvious; for example interior and exterior spaces are demarcated at the same time, leaving the viewer in a quandary as to their position in relation to the object’s orientation.

Architectural Formlessness

...architecture itself is nothing. It exists only to control and shape the entire social arena. It is constituted by this impulse propelling it to erect itself as the centre and to organise all activities around itself.

Dennis Hollier⁵⁴

Within the abstraction of familiar qualities of the built environment, there is also the quality of the formless (*informe*) referred to by Georges Bataille in the late 1920s and most recently resurrected by Rosalind Kraus and Yves-

⁵³ Berrebi, *op. cit.* p. 2

⁵⁴ Hollier, Denis. *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989. p. 51

Alain Bois in their exhibition *L'Informe: mode d'emploi* (1996) and the catalogue, *Formless: a user's guide* (1996).

The 'formless', according to Bataille, 'is not only an adjective with a certain meaning, but a term serving to deprecate, implying the general demand that everything should have a form'.⁵⁵ The term is often used for works that don't fit into a neat category of art production or have a certain abject quality to them. It is also used for works that contain many disparate elements, such as installation, or sound works. It does not imply, however, that the work is without form as one can have form within the 'formless'.⁵⁶

Bois wrote in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue for *Formless: a Users Guide*, 'with regard to the *informe*, it is a matter of ... locating certain operations that brush modernism against the grain'⁵⁷. The task the author-curators, Krauss and Bois, set themselves, in keeping with Bataille's dictum, was not to define formlessness, but to apply it as a way of re-assessing the way artworks had been historicised. For their exhibition they proposed a group of works that, though fitting within the canons of modernism, could be extracted and instilled with a different context that was neither chronological nor set by whichever movement the artist was aligned with at the time of the work's making.

⁵⁵ Bataille, Georges. "Georges Bataille from 'Critical Dictionary'", originally published in *Documents*, Paris, 1929-30. Cited in Harrison and Wood. *op. cit.* p. 483

⁵⁶ See Jones, Caroline A. "Form and Formless." In *A Companion to Contemporary Art since 1945*, edited by Amelia Jones. Blackwell Companions in Art History, 127-44. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2006. Jones' discussion of form and the formless encompasses the notion that formalism and its antithesis, the formless, have been ideas that have permeated modern art from the early Twentieth Century, since before Bataille's *Documents* were written. In this essay, Jones writes of the formless as being a reaction to the common mode of artistic production of the time. In particular her discussion of the paintings of Wols (Alfred Otto Wolfgang Schulze [1913-1951]) in regards to form within the formless and also the impact installation has had on the theorization of the formless, are most pertinent to this paper.

⁵⁷ Bois, Yve-Alain. "The Use Value of 'Formless'." In *Formless: A User's Guide*, edited by Yve-Alain Bois, Rosalind E. Krauss and Centre Georges Pompidou., 13-40. New York Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books ; Distributed by MIT Press, 1997. p. 16

An example Bois uses to express this re-assessment was, 'to show that Jackson Pollock's *Full Fathom Five* (1947) can be read as a fried egg'⁵⁸, a tongue-in-cheek description of an important work within this artist's oeuvre. Later in the catalogue, Krauss expands on the re-reading of Pollock's work by describing the *horizontality* of his method of painting as Pollock's contribution to the formless, echoing Joseph Kosuth's statement, 'If Pollock is important it is because he painted on loose canvas horizontally to the floor'.⁵⁹ By removing his work from the wall to paint upon the floor, Pollock generated a reading of his work that implied the horizontal, which is in opposition to the very trait of being human, which is to say, existing in the vertical.⁶⁰ This re-reading of Pollock's work resonates with Rancière's distribution of the sensible in so far as it re-interprets the artist's oeuvre, adding to the multiple ways of understanding the affect Pollock had upon modern art. The *informe* is similarly present within the works made for this project as they re-interpret the architectural space of the gallery using methods and conceptual approaches common to late modernist art practices.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 21

⁵⁹ Kosuth. *op. cit.* p. 858

⁶⁰ Krauss, Rosalind E. "Horizontality." In *Formless: A User's Guide*, edited by Yve-Alain Bois, Rosalind E. Krauss and Centre Georges Pompidou., 93-103. New York, Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books; Distributed by MIT Press, 1997. p. 95



Fig. 1: Jackson Pollock, *Full Fathom Five*, 1947

Horizontality, Bois writes, is where the *informe* is most obvious.⁶¹ This is due to the verticality or rectitude of the human form, leading to the *informe* becoming 'most obvious' as the vertical 'rotates' to become horizontal. This inversion is evident in the early cubist paintings of Picasso, that lead the viewer to understand the space within the picture plane as though they are looking down upon a surface⁶². This aspect of the *informe* is relevant to this project as it relates to the gestalt, an organised whole that is perceived as more than the sum of its parts.⁶³ Simple symmetrical objects such as cubes or pyramids that can be understood in full without seeing the whole object are examples of gestalt objects.

Krauss and Bois divided their exhibition into four categories through which to illuminate the formless via the selected works from the 1930s to the contemporary – although only three artists from the 1990s made the cut: Mike Kelley, Cindy Sherman, Allan McCollum – the majority of artists were from the '50s through to the '70s. The four categories were *horizontality*,

⁶¹ Bois, *op. cit.* p. 26

⁶² *Ibid.* p. 28

⁶³ The Minimalists were most interested in Gestalt theory, particularly Robert Morris, whose early simple polyhedrons came to typify Minimalist tendencies within popular culture.

base materialism, pulse and entropy. For the purposes of this paper I will focus on how horizontality and entropy are embodied in the work of four contemporary artists, Oscar Tuazon, Monika Sosnowska and the collaborative duo, Elmgreen and Dragset and how this relates to the project.

Uncertain Architectures

Thus the dream of architecture, among other things, is to escape entropy.

Yve-Alain Bois.⁶⁴

Oscar Tuazon cites 'outsider' architecture and alternative or portable shelters and structures as the main influences for his large-scale installations and sculptures.⁶⁵ References to shack or do-it-yourself (DIY) style dwellings are prominent throughout his oeuvre. Using simple building materials, such as concrete, rough, unfinished timber beams, steel, and glass, Tuazon constructs objects and environments that thwart the functional nature of architecture. From the initial stages of rough sketches, through to erecting the structures in the gallery, the artist employs a planning and fabrication process that echoes the DIY style dwellings, to overcome problems that surface during the making process.⁶⁶

For example, *Untitled* (2010) is a work that would be very difficult to construct off-site and re-install within the gallery space. Composed of a large scale grid that flows through the gallery spaces of the Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland, the work that stood two to four metres high was built from large, rough-cut timber beams, held together at their junction points by steel

⁶⁴ Bois, Yve-Alain. "T: Threshold." In *Formless: A User's Guide*, edited by Yve-Alain Bois, Rosalind E. Krauss and Centre Georges Pompidou., 185-91. New York, Cambridge, Mass.: Zone Books; Distributed by MIT Press, 1997. p. 187

⁶⁵ Rose, Julian. "Structural Tension." *Artforum International* Vol. 49, no. 2 (2010): Pg 221

⁶⁶ Campagnola, Sonia. "Oscar Tuazon: Formal Concerns, Utopian Concepts." In *FlashArtOnline.com: Flash Art*, 2010.

brackets. The modular structure created its own internal logic, irrespective of the space in which it was housed; it blocked doorways as the beams passed through them and, in places, punched through the plaster walls of the gallery, ignoring the flow and function of the gallery space it inhabited. By creating its own spatial logic regardless of the space it occupied, Tuazon's structure questioned the gallery space according to Rancière's logic of the distribution of the sensible. This new spatial logic that forces viewers to renegotiate their movement through the space, leads them to question the existing structure of the gallery.



Fig. 2: Oscar Tuazon, *Untitled*, 2010. Installation view

Using architecture as the starting point, Tuazon's works respond to themes that resonate across art and architecture.⁶⁷ His works further extend the themes of horizontality and entropy (developed by Krauss and Bois) as two elements inherent to contemporary architecture.

Rem Koolhaas' *CCTV (China Central Television)* tower in Beijing (2004-08) is an example of a skyscraper tipping to the horizontal, defying gravity in its archway structure and expressing the *informe* by way of its seeming impossibility. Frank Gehry's *Guggenheim Museum* in Bilbao (1991-97), on

⁶⁷ Rose, *op. cit.* p. 222

the other hand tends toward the entropic, as its external walls shift and morph, giving the illusion of a splintered ship.⁶⁸



Fig. 3: Rem Koolhaas and Ole Scheeren, *CCTV Building*, Beijing, 2004-08



Fig. 6: Frank Gehry, *Guggenheim Museum*, Bilbao, 1991-97

Horizontal and entropic states operate within Tuazon's work. *Bend it Till it Breaks* (2009) for example, was a large frame construction built from multiple materials, rough cut beams, steel and concrete. The frame was built as a horizontal structure, longer than it is tall. The artist utilised the modular wooden section of frame as a support for concrete beams the same dimension as the wooden beams. The concrete beams, however, were cantilevered from the frame, not supported from underneath, leading the concrete to warp and sag. If not for the chain pulleys that hung from the beams above, the concrete beams would have failed as soon as they were rendered. *Bend it Till it Breaks* is an object lesson in the structural limits of concrete, as Tuazon said himself, 'I want to push materials to the point where they actually fail'⁶⁹. The rubble that collects below these structures illustrates that entropy is inherent in this action.

⁶⁸ Foster, Hal. *The Art-Architecture Complex*. London: Verso Books, 2011. p. 14

⁶⁹ Rose, *op. cit.* p. 223



Fig. 7: Oscar Tuazon, *Bend it Till it Breaks*, 2009. Installation view

Tuazon has utilised similar structural failures in other works, such as *Dead Wrong* (2011) where he poured concrete into the interior of a dividing stud-wall, until the base of the wall failed, leaving concrete spilling from the interior. This is another entropic action that focuses on the material properties of the mediums used, insinuating formalist tendencies that echo a parallel to those of the Minimalists.

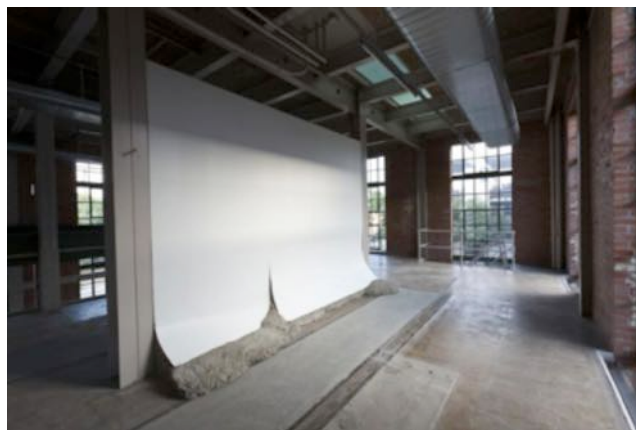


Fig. 8: Oscar Tuazon, *Dead Wrong*, 2011: Installation view

Although drawing on architecture as the starting point, Tuazon interrogates and engages materials in a way that mirrors the formalism of the late

modernist period. His structures and installations operate as experiments in spatial configurations, while the materiality of his structures contributes to the commons, as Rancière defined that idea: the ‘common of the community...render[ing] visible what had not been’⁷⁰. Through Rancière’s aesthetic theories it is apparent that Tuazon’s practice operates to affect a redistribution of the sensible.

The Architectural Uncanny

Architecture refers to whatever there is in an edifice that cannot be reduced to building, whatever allows a construction to escape from purely utilitarian concerns, whatever is aesthetic about it.

Denis Hollier⁷¹

Whereas Tuazon’s work re-interprets the materials and construction techniques that underpin architecture, the work of Polish artist Monica Sosnowska takes forms and structures from vernacular architecture and, through sometimes quite extreme manipulation, repurposes them as sculptural objects. The objects are staircases, handrails or market stalls, twisted, deformed or squashed into spaces too small for them, like discarded items from a building site. Sosnowska’s objects come from the functional zones of buildings and public space, such as stairways and fire escapes, and so represent neglected areas of the urban environment. Hidden from sight, these areas are used, passed by and through, designed for function over form. By utilising the architectural elements that provide ‘function’ for the non-spaces of urban thoroughfares, Sosnowska subverts the pragmatic, into an aesthetic device. *Staircase* (2010-12), for example, was installed in the foyer area of K21, Düsseldorf. Overhanging the central wall of the atrium, the spiral staircase had a liquid quality, in the way it

⁷⁰ Rancière, Jacques. *Aesthetics and Its Discontents*. English ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. p. 25

⁷¹ Hollier. *op. cit.* p. 31

stretched towards the ground, hanging as if it had fallen from a great height. The object is intriguing, sited in such a way as to appear almost functional but, simultaneously a ruin.



Fig. 9: Monika Sosnowska, *The Staircase*, 2010-12. Installation view

Sosnowska's objects are not detritus sourced from rubbish, they are newly made, manufactured in the same factories that produce these items on a daily basis, then manipulated by the workers that have created them; 'after making a standard element... the workers then "destroy" it, under [Sosnowska's] direction, using equipment such as fork lifts and hydraulic presses'.⁷² By employing this method of production and destruction, Sosnowska continues the tradition of outsourcing that the Minimalist artists initiated. Through outsourcing to the industrial sector, the skills and techniques of workers are utilised to achieve a finish that can only come from day to day manufacture.⁷³ In this sense, while Sosnowska's works are twisted, squashed and bent out of shape, it is as though they have been made that way, rather than found discarded after the demolition of an

⁷² Mytkowska, Joanna. "The Liquid Modernity of Monika Sosnowska's Sculpture." *Parkett* No. 91 (2012): p. 49

⁷³ *Ibid.*

apartment block or other public building. These are new objects produced to look like discarded fragments from the everyday, for the specific purpose of being an artwork. In this sense, these objects represent the upheaval generated by the failure of modernism within Sosnowska's hometown of Warsaw. In an interview with the curator Ann Temkin, Sosnowska stated, 'I think that the place where an artist lives is influential. The confrontation with reality creates opinions'.⁷⁴

A work that reflects this sentiment is *1:1* (2007), shown in the Polish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale and subsequently at the Schaulager Gallery, Basel in 2008. Composed of the steel frame of a Polish apartment building, squashed to fit inside the exhibition space, the frailty of this structure is evident in the bowing frame as it struggles to fit inside the space. Painted black to contrast with the surrounding white walls, Sosnowska speaks of the work as a parasite, stating 'It should look as if two buildings have been constructed in the same space, and have to live in symbiosis, or rather, to parasite on each other'.⁷⁵ In *1:1* we see a readymade structure, manipulated by the artist to illustrate the concept of Socialist Modernism in decline.⁷⁶ This is a manifest example of Rancière's distribution of the sensible in relation to the utopian ideals of modernism. By displaying the skeleton of the ubiquitous Socialist apartment block, its function completely stripped as if neutered, Sosnowska has reconfigured the way these structures can be understood.

⁷⁴ Temkin, Ann. "Interview between Curator Ann Temkin and Monika Sosnowska." 2006 http://moma.org/wp/projects/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/sosnowska_interview.pdf.

⁷⁵ Cited in Dillon, Brian. "Parasites." *Parkett* No. 91, 2012. Pg 26. Originally from Monika Sosnowska, *1:1* (Cologne: walther König, 2008), p. 45

⁷⁶ The components for Eastern bloc apartment buildings, such as pre-fabricated concrete slabs and steel frames, were produced in 'home factories' for much of the 1970s. See Mytkowska. *op. cit.* p. 47



Fig. 10: Monika Sosnowska, *1:1*, 2007. Installation view

Another aspect to Sosnowska's practice is the creation of installations that manipulate the gallery space via the existing architectural forms. At times the installations become the walls the art is hung from, at other times they are interventions within the space that the viewer moves through. *Untitled* (2004) was installed in the Serpentine Gallery, London and comprised a maze-like corridor and irregularly shaped rooms, with walls painted mustard yellow. The walls were angled at varying degrees, designed to unnerve the viewer as they walked through the work. There was not an obvious way to traverse through this work; no signposts as to how to engage or exit, so the viewer became immersed within the architectural situation created by Sosnowska.⁷⁷ In his review of *Untitled*, Tom Morton comments on the way the work constructs a situation where the viewer becomes an operant, or art object within the context of the work:

Untitled amplifies [the] sociological [aspect], creating an echo not so much of a gallery's architecture as of the matrix of actions and reactions that the idea of a gallery provokes.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Morton, Tom. "Monika Sosnowska, Serpentine Gallery, London." In, *Frieze* no. 89 (2005). Published electronically March, 2005.

http://www.frieze.com/issue/review/monika_sosnowska/.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*



Fig. 11: Monika Sosnowska, *Untitled*, 2004. Installation view

At the heart of this project is the artist's conviction that an artwork has the capacity to change the status of the viewer in relation to the space and art object. By devising situations where the viewer is engaged with the artwork as with architecture, Sosnowska's work treads a fine line between art and architecture, questioning the viewer's relation to the object and how this relationship relates to the space they occupy.

The Critique of the Architecture of the Institution

The flow of energy between concepts of space articulated through the artwork and the space we occupy is one of the basic and least understood forces in modernism.

O'Doherty⁷⁹

Brian O'Doherty's remark was made at the end of the 1970s, as the art world underwent a massive upheaval, caused by the medium-specificity of modernism giving way to multiplicity and divergence. These ideas continued to circulate through the 1980s and began to coalesce in the 1990s, when artists began to readdress space at the time a new and alternative mode of Institutional Critique emerged. The work of artists Michael Asher, Daniel Buren, Andrea Fraser and Hans Haacke was marked by the nature of the

⁷⁹ O'Doherty. *op. cit.* p. 38

historical period they were working in; a time of social protest and upheaval that provoked anti-establishment artworks.

In contrast to this 'serious' context, the artworks of artist duo Elmgreen and Dragset (Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset) exemplify a satirical spatially-based critique of the institution. The duo began working together in the mid '90s creating a series of works entitled *Powerless Structures* (1997-).⁸⁰ These range from objects associated with the art gallery, such as shipping crates, to the actual space of the gallery itself. Each work subverts the function of the object or space represented, while questioning the institution of art through the objects and spaces that form the structures of the art world itself.

Powerless Structures Fig. 159 (2001), Fig. 184 (2001) and Fig. 187 (2002) are standard shipping crates, used to transport art around the world, in different stages of damage or decay. Fig. 159 sits upright in the gallery, white paint from a can spilt over the side and pooled at the base of the crate. Fig. 184 balances on its corner, as though dropped from a height, with the contents spilled across the floor. The most extreme of the three, Fig. 187, protrudes through a hole in the ceiling, seemingly undamaged but declaring the force with which it seems to have hit the floor above. The series *Powerless Structures* pokes fun at the economic heart of the art world, showing the object fragility of the works that are traded around the world. These works are as much statements on the extent to which the art world functions, as comments on a consumerist society in the era of globalisation.

⁸⁰ Holzwarth, Hans Werner. "Elmgreen & Dragset." In *100 Contemporary Artists = 100 Zeitgenössische Künstler = 100 Artistes Contemporains*, edited by Hans Werner Holzwarth. 2 v. (695 p.). Köln ; Los Angeles: Taschen, 2009. p. 164



Fig. 12: Elmgreen & Dragset, *Powerless Structures*, Fig. 159, 2001. Installation view



Fig. 13: Elmgreen & Dragset, *Powerless Structures*, Fig. 184, 2001. Installation view



Fig. 14: Elmgreen & Dragset, *Powerless Structures*, Fig. 187, 2002. Installation view

Additional works in the *Powerless Structures* series are based on galleries and exhibition spaces. Once again, they poke fun at the institution by hanging the ubiquitous white cube of the contemporary gallery space in mid-air from balloons (*Elevated Gallery – Powerless Structures*, Fig. 146, 2001); by digging the gallery into a field (*Dug Down Gallery – Powerless Structures*, Fig. 45, 1998); and by laying a wall onto its side in the middle of another gallery space (*Tilted Wall – Powerless Structures*, Fig. 150, 2001) Elmgreen and Dragset have devised numerous ways to subvert the space of the gallery, calling into question the dominance of this environment through its representation as broken, fragmented or malfunctioning. That these objects can be read in multiple ways reinforces the uncertainty aimed at the institutions that comprise the contemporary art world.⁸¹

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

As a fragment of the gallery, separated from the space that houses it, *Tilted Wall* could be read as a reference to Ricard Serra's *Tilted Arc*, removed as it was from the space where it was created. Elmgreen and Dragset's version references the space in which it is displayed, made to mimic the walls surrounding it. *Tilted Wall* is a forlorn object, lying upon its side, the large object taking up the majority of the floor space and leaving little room for viewers to walk around it. The 'broken' wall, with door, replete with an ineffective exit sign suggests a state of futility and disfunction.

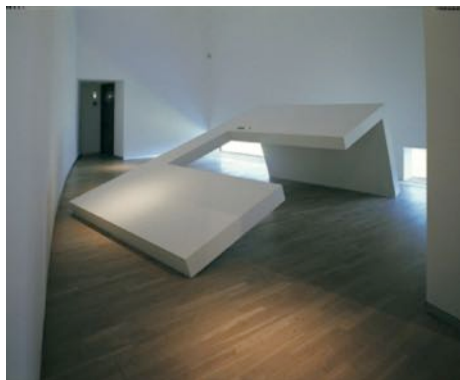


Fig. 15: Elmgreen and Dragset, *Tilted Wall - Powerless Structure*, Fig.150, 2001. Installation view

By displaying the gallery space as a medium, Elmgreen and Dragset question the structures that deliver and frame contemporary art. *Dug Down Gallery* (1998) subverts the white cube space by locating it within a field just outside Reykjavík, Iceland, buried up to the roof-line, open to the elements. The work is three by five metres and sits two and a quarter metres below the surface of the field. It is lit at night by four high-powered flood lights hanging from the four walls, each pointed into the centre of the space. *Dug Down Gallery* is an artwork that could display art, sited in a situation where it will slowly decay, where the white of the walls are exposed to the weather, creating a trap for the careless walker, viewer or artist.



Fig. 16: Elmgreen and Dragset, *Dug Down Gallery - Powerless Structures*, Fig. 45, 1998. Installation view

Part Two: Structural Situations, the body of work

By taking aesthetic responsibility in a very explicit way for the design of the installation space, the artist reveals the hidden, sovereign dimension of the contemporary democratic order that politics, for the most part, tries to conceal.

Boris Groys⁸²

Introduction

This project, both conceptually and formally, began as an extension of my 2007 honours project that included *Something in the way of things...* (2007); an abstracted representation of an imagined area of public space, complete with security devices. This work comprised a large wedge, attached to, and painted the same colour as the gallery walls. It was sited in a thoroughfare of the exhibition in such a way that to pass under the wedge viewers needed to duck and lean to the side. The floor of the 4.5m square space was also painted the same colour as the gallery walls, seamlessly blending the object with the surrounds. Around the perimeter of the space, black and yellow security tape was placed, as a didactic sign that viewers were entering an alternate space or zone. The installation read as the underside of a stairway, non-exhibition space, or not-quite-completed construction area, that played on the ambiguity of the object and its incorporation into the gallery via the assimilation of common signs sourced from urban spaces.

⁸² Groys, Boris. "Politics of Installation." *e-flux journal* #2 (2009): p. 7.

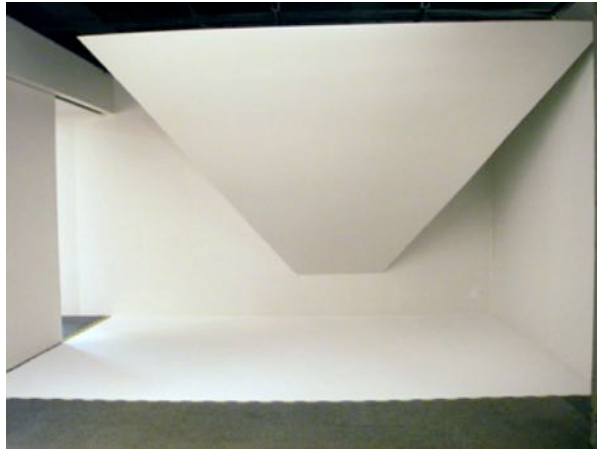


Fig. 1: *Something in the way of things...*, 2007.
Installation view

This work drew on a study of security devices used within the public realm, specifically the hidden elements that mediate our movement through these spaces. The main focus of my research during this period was the investigation of the multi-disciplinary urban planning and design approach, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). CPTED is a set of physical strategies that rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions which precede criminal acts by impinging on the built, social and administrative environment. CPTED incorporates such devices as open lines of sight, sufficient lighting and the reduction of objects such as hedges that could be used to hide behind. CPTED is now in-built into the majority of city spaces, public buildings (schools, hospitals, libraries) and other areas where people gather en-masse. Through *Something in the way*, I intended to highlight the highly integrated aspect of the physical manifestations of social control. In order to connect security-based urban designed elements with an art-historical framework, I referred to the research of Anthony Vidler, Rosalind Krauss and Zigmunt Bauman.

In parallel with the study of urban structures, I was also researching the art of the late modernist period, particularly the work of the Minimalists. My premise was that the aesthetic of the 'specific object' had been usurped by popular design and architecture, making its way into the vernacular of our

city streets through, for example, the use of pre-fabricated concrete slabs used as a predominant mode of construction, and into our homes through the trend towards clean-lined, flat-pack furniture. The work I subsequently produced was influenced by the work of Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman and Dan Graham, among others, and I appropriated certain aesthetic traits from these artists. My honours work married the two streams of the flat-pack and minimalist object on an architectural scale, generating the effect of un-settling the viewer, prompting them to move in a certain way, while blending in with the environment around it.

This research project investigated and extended beyond the public realm back into the gallery, where the objects created mediate and interrogate the architectural space common to gallery spaces and by extension the lived space that we inhabit. The works affect the environments in which they are shown, impacting on the viewer both physically and psychologically as they enter into and move through the spaces.

Methods

The practice-based research undertaken during this candidature was conducted as a series of exhibition-based projects. Each work created for exhibition was devised through a combination of studio-based experiments informed by theoretical texts about spatial practice. The initial stage of the process was to interrogate the gallery spaces in which the works would be shown, focussing on an architectural element or curatorial premise that could be manipulated, hidden or exaggerated. The focus of this spatial examination was to highlight elements within a space that related to how

the space was used, by the viewer, artist or practitioner.⁸³ While the emphasis of these investigations were often concerned with the actual space of the gallery, the outcomes informed by the spatial theory discussed earlier in this exegesis focussed on the viewer in relation to the work within the space.

Each work was initiated through the traditional 'proposal to exhibit' within specific galleries or being invited to exhibit as part of a group show or residency. The project's emphasis on space meant that much of the studio-based experimentation (whether through computer modelling or actual physical models) could only commence once the space was secured. This often led to long periods of making downtime when the project focused more on the theory and strategy than materiality. The work was often created in situ, informed directly by the spaces in which it was created. In this sense, the architecture, viewer and history of the gallery space combined to contribute to the work in progress. In reference to the chronological nature of the project, each work produced contributed to an accumulation of spatial knowledge and experience that informed each subsequent work.

...the first frame, the studio, proves to be a filter which allows the artist to select his work screened from public view, and curators and dealers to select in turn that work to be seen by others.⁸⁴

The theme of "gallery as studio" was first posited by the French artist Daniel Buren in his essay titled *The Function of the Studio*. Writing in the winter of 1970-71, Buren describes the studio as a space where art is filtered for viewing, first by the artist, and subsequently by curator or critic, in choosing the work to be extracted and shown in public. Buren argues that art

⁸³ By 'used' I mean all uses of a space, not just the obvious, ie. in a gallery space the primary aim is to show art. This work is concerned with a viewer's movement through the space, how the space may have been used in the past, the context of the space in relation to its location, or existing structures that constitute the way the spaces are understood on a phenomenological level.

⁸⁴ Buren, Daniel. "The Function of the Studio..", originally published in *October*, 10, Fall, 1979. Cited in *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings*, edited by Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson. 110-17. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009. p. 112

produced in the studio is always 'of another space' when removed from the studio and so is slightly 'off kilter' when seen outside of this space, such as in a museum.⁸⁵ Buren proposes two conditions under which the work of art can be created: either the work must be the ultimate place of the work, the work becomes its own space, as in the case of the Minimal or Conceptual works of the day, or the artist makes the work for a specific and predictable space, such as the white cube gallery. Each of these conditions, according to Buren, cause the work to be 'banalised' and ultimately compromised. Buren ends his essay with the definitive statement: 'The art of yesterday and today is not only marked by the studio as an essential, often unique, place of production: it proceeds from it. All my work proceeds from its extinction'.⁸⁶

This sentiment resonates with my project. Although planning was often carried out in the studio, where concepts were considered and models constructed to determine the dimensions and scale of the work, it was not until I had access to a space and materials that individual projects were realised. While this method of working is often associated with site-specific art, the works made for this project differ in their intention: to associate the structure with the viewer, as opposed to the structure with the site. This shifts the spatial hierarchy of the work made for this project to the viewer having dominance over site. In this sense the works respond to all facets of the site, rather than just the physical structure.

Constructing in a gallery space necessitates reactive decisions to be made and allows for a certain amount of spontaneity that could not be achieved had the work been constructed beforehand in a studio. Being *of* the spaces they were created in lent the works a locational specificity and authenticity. This claim is bolstered by Michael Asher's strategy, to use 'the objects, elements and relations that pertain to the institutional site that has

⁸⁵ *Ibid.* p. 113

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* p. 117

commissioned work from him'.⁸⁷ As discussed in the previous section, however, though it has certain affinities with Asher's, my work differs from his because of its particular institutional focus. By utilising similar aesthetic decisions to Asher, such as blending structures with the gallery space or playing on preconceived ideas as to what art is, my work takes the methods used by Asher as ready-mades.

During the course of my candidature this process of making and understanding a space both architecturally and through its use has been materially and conceptually refined. Each space has had a certain quality I have focussed on, be it a specific aspect of the architecture or a curatorial premise. I have approached each space with the same key element in mind: the ability for space to manipulate the way the viewer interacts with it and with others within the space. Through the refinement of these processes, and with a strong focus on this key element, a more developed 'blueprint' of how the works are planned and developed has emerged. This has led to a more structured and confident approach to the making of the works and provided the additional benefit of enabling me to further abstract the spatial qualities of the gallery.

The act of constructing the work within the gallery has also magnified the performative quality of my practice and working methods. As the project progressed, the personal nature of the works was highlighted, exposing how 'I' featured within the construction's context. This was an interesting shift from the project's original focus on the space outside of my body, separate from myself. While the project was initially concerned with public space, as the project progressed I became more interested in the abstraction of space and the possibilities open to a spatial practice through gallery spaces. Constructing in the gallery allowed the works to exist in a mediated environment without being controlled by building regulations, allowing them to exist in a liminal space outside of the public zone. While

⁸⁷ Peltomäki. *op. cit.* p. 2

this seems at odds with the project's concern with the creation of space, it allowed the work to abstract notions of flow, regulated heights and structure that would be measured and controlled if made in a public thoroughfare.

The Work

In this chapter I will discuss each of the five main works that comprise the research project, highlighting the context in which they were made and their associated outcomes. The works made are best understood in chronological sequence, as the outcomes from each discrete project informed the direction and intention of the next. At least two of the works were made primarily to trial specific aspects of works to be made in the future. Despite being experimentation, I see these as propositional installations in their own right. In this respect, all the works produced for this project describe an accumulation of spatial practice and forms. I have entitled each section for the works with a characteristic of spatial movement as a descriptor for the way each work functions within their exhibition space, and to also highlight the work's specific context in relation to the overall project.

The works made for this project were constructed using existing architectural features or uses of space, as a starting point. As the project progressed it became apparent that site was a limiting factor, both conceptually and practically, and that in order to proceed I would need to investigate different avenues of and for installation. With this in mind I took elements inherent to the earliest works produced, namely video and performance, and focused on these in the later installations. The construction of spatial elements is primary to this project, however an actual rather than suggested human element became more evident, as the project progressed.

Each work shares the same suite of materials that are recycled from one work and context to the next. This factor, in addition to the size and nature of each installation, means only the documentation remains when the exhibition is over. This decision to recycle was not driven by an environmental concern, but an interest in carrying a physical element as residue of each work through to the next, actively demonstrating the act of accumulation. Each work interrogates an aspect of space, and the way an object or structure affects its environment. In this sense, the works emerged from key concepts such as signifiers of public and private, control of movement and site. A process of spatial experimentation was used to examine the significance and implication of these architectural and societal devices.

Pathway/surveillance: *GRID 55*

The first work made for this project, *GRID 55* (2009) was installed in Entrepôt Gallery, a small exhibition space at the entrance to the Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart. The space is rectangular and comes to a point on the street front. Entrepôt has white walls, dark brown wooden roof beams and a gridded window that stretches the length of the space. The window was the starting point for *GRID 55* providing the initial dimensions for a three dimensional grid that would span the gallery from window to wall, and create a maze-like structure a viewer could pass through.

GRID 55 comprised a grid made from 35x70mm pine framing timber, the material commonly used in the construction of stud walls in galleries, homes and offices. As the materials used already make up a majority of the existing infrastructure, such as the walls, the work enacts a paring-back of the structures already in place. In this way the installation functions as a temporary foil to the existing structures of the gallery, extending into the space and interrupting a viewer's spatial experience.

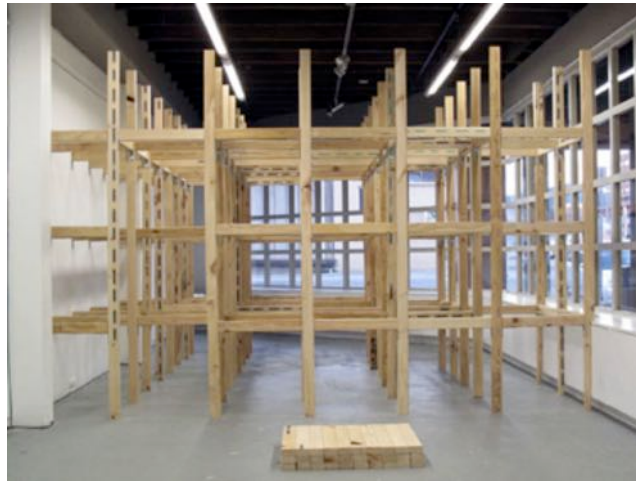


Fig. 2: *GRID 55*, 2009. Installation view

On entering the space, the grid was situated to the right of the doorway spanning from wall to window. Establishing a maze-like pathway, the work acted as a means for controlling the movement of the viewer. The pathway was just wide enough in the first two columns for viewers to pass through, by turning sideways, however, each column's width decreased in size from 650mm to 400mm in the final cell, which is half the standard door width. My intention was to make the process of passing through the work slightly uncomfortable and to create situations where viewers would need to negotiate with others within the space so as to be able to pass through the work. This shifted the meaning of the space/work from a merely physical to a sociable or emotional exchange, as viewers eyed each other from either end of the work and decided who would go first. The constrictive nature of the passage through the work also contributed to feelings of insecurity, feelings not normally associated with Entrepôt Gallery.

By activating the viewing space of the gallery, the work reconfigures the viewer's interactions with the environment of the work. This shift of encounter recalls a passage from Brian O'Doherty's *Inside the White Cube*:

The frame of the easel picture is as much a psychological container for the artist as the room in which the viewer stands is for him or her. The perspective positions everything within the picture along a cone

of space, against which the frame acts like a grid, echoing those cuts of foreground, middle ground and distance within.⁸⁸

Although discussing the frame of a painting, O'Doherty's description of how space is represented within an image applies to *GRID 55* insofar as the grid of the work re-framed the gallery space for the viewer. As they entered the space, the work re-framed their view of the outside space already dissected by the grid of the window. The grid of the work, however, provided a perspectival view into the outside world that is the equivalent of O'Doherty's 'cone of space'.



Fig. 3: *GRID 55*, 2009. Installation view

Also in the space were two televisions, two security cameras and a console used to automatically film as people entered into the work, with one of the cameras showing real-time footage of the viewers in the space. The words *GRID 55* were painted on the wall opposite the door in a grey, neutral font as the only signage in the space. There was no indicator of the artist's name, the work's materials or description of the work, within the space. My desire was to disrupt the engagement with a work through the usual gallery signage, leaving the interpretation to the viewer, rather than mediating their experience through the common practice of artist statements and descriptions. The intent was to add agency to the viewer's experience of the

⁸⁸ O'Doherty. *op. cit.* p. 18

work, implicating them in the space as an environment and allowing them to interpret diverse elements as they would in any non-gallery area or zone.



Fig. 4: *GRID 55*, 2009

The grid of the main installation referenced Sol Lewitt's modular works from the late 1960s, however I did not intend for this piece to perform as an object in space, as Lewitt's works often operate. *GRID 55* divided the gallery space in two, configuring a situation in which the viewer needed to walk through the work to see a screen placed on the other side. On this screen a real-time image of the space the viewer had just walked through was playing. The grid was positioned in such a way so as to reduce the viewers' capacity to see themselves when standing in front of the screen. To this end, the monitor was positioned on the ground.

In recalling the early video work of Bruce Nauman, particularly *Live-Taped Video Corridor* (1970), this situation instigated a response from the viewer and insinuated them into the overall work. *Live-Taped Video Corridor* consisted of two stacked monitors at the end of a long, narrow corridor the viewer could walk down. The feed to the monitor positioned on top was a live feed from above the entrance to the corridor; the bottom monitor showed the same view, but pre-recorded. Thus the viewer saw their back as they walked towards the monitor, receding in the frame of the image as they came closer to the end of the corridor. Here the viewer monitored their own

activity, dislocating their sense of space from where they were to where they saw themselves in the monitor⁸⁹. This process of dislocation/location was also at play in *GRID 55*, where it was used as a way of engaging the viewer in a contemplation of where they were in the gallery space in relation to the camera/monitor loop.

As the viewer entered the gallery space, directly opposite, on a shelf at waist height was a console for automatically recording the view from above the grid. There was no signage to indicate what this object was, although cables running to the monitor through the grid gave an indication that it was connected to it and a camera.

On the opposite wall to the screen on the floor, and to the left of the entrance and signage, was a monitor with a camera above that displayed an image of the work being made in time-lapse. This footage was sped up so the entire installation of the work, from start to finish had a running time of one minute.⁹⁰



Fig. 5: *GRID 55*, 2009

⁸⁹ de Angelus, Michelle. "Interview with Bruce Nauman, May 27 and 30, 1980." In *Please Pay Attention Please : Bruce Nauman's Words : Writings and Interviews*, edited by Bruce Nauman and Janet Kraynak. 197-304. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005. pp. 263-264

⁹⁰ This was recorded from the camera above the monitor, however the camera was no longer connected to the screen.

At the heart of *GRID 55* and this project is the desire to understand gallery space, how it is negotiated and the ways in which people interact with/in it. By setting up situations in which viewers are compelled to behave in a certain way, due to construction, lighting, sound and scale, I hoped to elicit physical responses that in turn, would make viewers assess the space around them more consciously. These physical responses (moving through the object in a certain way, responding to their image in the monitor) were elicited in a number of ways through the work. Physically the grid in the gallery space occupied a large area, and engaged viewers in negotiating the space through conscious and at times awkward manoeuvring, contributing to their sense of deliberate engagement with the installation and, by extension, with the gallery space itself.

GRID 55 acted on and with the fabric of the gallery to elicit a physical response from the viewer in relation to an un-familiar structure, made from familiar materials. Monitors positioned in such a way that the viewers were not able to see themselves as they walked through the work lent a dislocated, abject quality to their experience of space and separateness from the space outside the gallery.

GRID 55 was the first situational work made for this project, in which the action of the viewer was integral to the work. It referenced art from the Minimalist period and some conceptual based works; namely Sol Lewitt's modular grids, (as previously mentioned) in addition to Dan Graham's and Bruce Nauman's early experiments with video surveillance. My intention was to include visual historical references as integral to the forms of each work, for the viewer to identify and consider. As the project progressed, and as I refined my process of spatial interpretation from one work to the next, these references became more abstracted.

Corridor/compression: *vice versa*

Following on from *GRID 55*, came *vice versa* (2009) exhibited at Inflight Gallery, Hobart. This was a semi-collaborative or reciprocal installation that ran in conjunction with Carolyn Wigston's *Trademark* which opened on the same night, at Hobart's other artist run initiative, 6a_ari. Wigston and I were members of the respective boards of the galleries. Wigston was a member of Inflight, while I was a member of the 6a_ari board. The exhibitions were devised to run in parallel to each other, and to incorporate a well-known element of the other site. Our involvement with the respective galleries meant that Wigston and I had an affinity with the spaces we represented, spatially and organisationally. While *vice versa* focussed on the physical structure of the gallery spaces, *Trademark*'s focal point was the logos that represented the galleries. These elements, the gallery spaces and logos, embody the identities of each gallery and are the structures by which the public comes to know such spaces.

For *vice versa* I re-created the space of 6a within the gallery of Inflight, thus super-imposing one gallery into the other, whilst Wigston used 6a's logo to plaster the walls of 6a. The joint openings and exhibitions ran in conjunction in an attempt to align the galleries and build a common audience and experience.

6a gallery was housed in an old warehouse and accessed via a lane-way between two houses. The walls of the gallery divided the overall space of the warehouse between the gallery, and the artist studios located behind the gallery walls. 6a was known to be a difficult space to work in, with odd angles, paint-marked concrete floor, dirty ceiling and an awkward configuration. The overall space of the gallery comprised two main areas with a short adjoining corridor. The first area was more typical of a gallery with white-painted plaster walls. At the end of the adjacent corridor there was a kitchenette that served as a darkened space commonly used as a

projection area for video works. Having sat on the board for two years, I felt quite familiar with the space and wanted to translate some of its idiosyncrasies to Inflight's much more conventional white-cube gallery space. The significance of translating one space onto the other was to superimpose the spatial eccentricities of 6a in a parasitic relationship, transforming the white-cube aesthetic of the host gallery and so subverting the neutrality of the container.

Fig. 6: The plans of 6a Gallery overlaid on the plans of Inflight

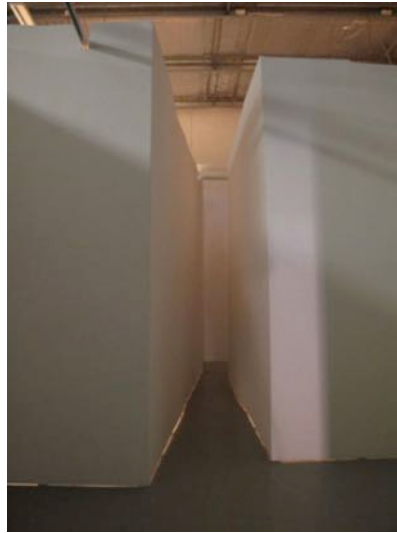


Fig. 7: *vice versa*, 2009. Installation view

I wanted to pay particular attention to an area of 6a – the corridor separating the main gallery from the projection/kitchenette area: as this was a transition space that people moved through, and to reference the corridor works of Bruce Nauman. Extending my experimentation with restrictive spaces in *GRID 55*, I was interested in making a space akin to Nauman's *Performance Corridor* of 1969. In referencing Nauman's corridors, I was interested in controlling the viewer's experience of the work without them being able to alter the piece⁹¹. Nauman's corridor works were preeminent examples of gallery-based architectural structures that manipulate the viewer in a particular way. Nauman went on to create a number of works that he coined 'environments', in which he re-orchestrated the space viewers passed through via spatial devices or the use of coloured lighting. The work *Green Light Corridor* (1970), for example, was a narrow corridor the viewer walked through, lit with an intense green light via coloured fluorescent tubes. The physical effect of the light on the viewer was disconcerting or calming, contingent on their personal perception of the space and the associations

⁹¹ Sharp, Willoughby. "Nauman Interview, 1970." In *Please Pay Attention Please : Bruce Nauman's Words : Writings and Interviews*, edited by Bruce Nauman and Janet Kraynak. 111-30. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005. p. 114

they brought to it.⁹² Nauman's corridors are an example of an architectural formlessness, functional in a spatial sense but only for a very specific purpose.



Fig. 8: Bruce Nauman, *Green Light Corridor*, 1970. Installation view

Due to the scale of *vice versa*, it became necessary for me to construct the installation within the gallery space. I employed this approach for all subsequent works in this project. Construction *in situ* allowed me to adjust aspects of the work as I made it, responding to idiosyncrasies of the spaces. This process of making is akin to a spatial collaboration, as the materials are cut to fit in the space, or the space is manipulated to fit the structure. During the construction of *vice versa*, I sought to make the wall height of the installation higher than the actual walls of 6a, which meant I needed to cut sections out for the lighting track to pass through. The effect of this detail was a visual rupture serving to highlight the DIY nature of construction in the easiest and least time-consuming manner.

⁹² Butterfield, Jan. "Bruce Nauman: The Center of Yourself, 1975." In *Please Pay Attention Please : Bruce Nauman's Words : Writings and Interviews*, edited by Bruce Nauman and Janet Kraynak. 173-82. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005. p. 179



Fig. 9: *vice versa*, view from entrance corridor

The entryway into the gallery space of *Inflight* was via a passage at the back of a cafe, which gave the viewer a sightline through to the rear wall of the space. During the construction of *vice versa*, I built part of a wall across the entrance, blocking half of the doorway. Despite the obstruction, through the corridor of the faux 6a space, the viewer had a direct line of sight to the back wall on entering the passage. I constructed the corridor so it tapered to the back, with the rear being only four hundred millimetres across, so the viewer had to turn sideways to make their way through. This taper also had the effect of an optical illusion, making the end wall appear further away than it was as the viewer approached the entrance to the gallery space. This effect shifted the viewer's perceptual relationship to the interior space of the work, making the gallery space an active, as opposed to passive arena.

In the space at the rear of the gallery that referenced the projection-kitchenette area of 6a, I projected the silent documentation of a performance I undertook on the opening night, entitled *Prize-fighter*. For the collaborative element of the parallel exhibitions, Wigston and myself ran a live feed from each space to the other, each of us 'exhibiting' an element of the installation that would be shown for the duration of the exhibitions. The

performance highlighted the process of making as spectacle, aestheticising the action inherent within the creation of the installation.



Fig. 10: *Prize-fighter*, 2009. Installation view

As this installation had been the largest I had undertaken to date, I conceived a durational performance within the interior of the walls, signifying the labour that was undertaken in the artist studios of 6a. For the performance I planned to box into pads for as long as possible, which ended up being one hour and ten minutes. I was concealed behind the walls of the installation, so viewers on opening night in the Inflight space could only hear what was happening, while the video feed was streamed to 6a, a few kilometres away. As the viewers entered the space, they were confronted by the rhythmic beat of boxing gloves hitting pads in an empty space with a projection of Wigston's work streaming from 6a. The aim of this setup was to disorient the viewer and make them question what it was they were hearing in relation to what it was they were seeing and experiencing in the space around them.

After the opening night I edited the video of the performance and projected it in the backspace of the installation, the equivalent area of 6a (projection/kitchenette). The scale of the image was life size, and the space it was projected into was just the right size for me to appear to be boxing

into the corner of the space of the rear wall of the gallery. As the footage was filmed from within the walls of the installation, the scene played was of me boxing in front of the studwork interior of the walls. The silent footage showed the interior of the gallery wall, as if the wall itself had been inverted or flipped over.

This work referenced Bruce Nauman's *Performance Corridor* (1969) and Vito Acconci's *Seedbed* (1972), works that placed viewers into situations in which they were involved in the works intimately, though on different levels of engagement. With Nauman's works the viewer was integral to its realisation, an aspect that came from the artist's own experiments with his body in the corridors he later showed as props for the viewer to engage with. Acconci's *Seedbed* on the other hand contrived a situation where the viewer was made to feel uncomfortable and to question if what they were experiencing was actually happening. Acconci positioned himself under the raised floor of the Sonnabend Gallery in New York, and masturbated while recounting his fantasies through a speaker to the audience situated above him, a wholly disconcerting experience.



Fig. 11: Vito Acconci, *Seedbed*, 1972. Video still from performance

Despite the obvious similarities of performing from behind a wall, out of sight of the gallery patrons, *vice versa*'s performative element was designed

more as a test for myself rather than a device to manipulate the viewer's response. However the space was designed with this manipulation in mind and aside from the silent projection at the back of the space, it was empty of any artifice or decoration. The combination of the structural elements slotted into the space of Inflight with the performance playing silently, in a space accessed by a narrow passage, contributed to questions of the structure of the object: the internal space behind the walls versus external space the viewer occupied.

Obstruction/façade: *(re)visit*

At the end of 2009 I was contacted by the Director of Poimena Gallery in Launceston, Katie Woodroffe, and invited to take part in a residency at the beginning of 2010. The gallery is located in the building that houses the Art Department of Launceston Church Grammar School and exhibits contemporary work from Australian and international artists. A component of the terms of the residency was to incorporate my own practice and introduce the idea of installation as a means of art making to the year 11 and 12 art classes.

Never having been to Poimena, I conducted a reconnaissance trip, to photograph the site and reflect on how to respond to the space. Poimena is situated in what was a house built in the mid-nineteen hundreds, which has had various functions, including an orphanage, boarding house, and now an art gallery. The history of the building, and also the school, is thick and multi-layered.

After documenting the site I considered the space of the gallery and how to include students collaboratively in the making of the finished work. I decided to use Poimena and the grounds of the school as the subject of the project. My aim was to provide a link to the site for the students as they began the

project, perhaps alleviating some of the apprehension that often comes with learning new skills and ways of looking at the world. I also thought this approach would allow me to gain insights into the ways the students used the space of the school, that would enable me to represent the site through a different lens. This process of devising the work contributed to my shifting expectations of the space and expanded on the familiarity the students have with the environment of the gallery itself. I was hoping to see the school through the eyes of the students while they experienced the gallery through the lens of my own spatial practice.

The gallery comprises two rooms with doorways facing each other (one space larger than the other), separate from the art rooms, which are at the back of the building.

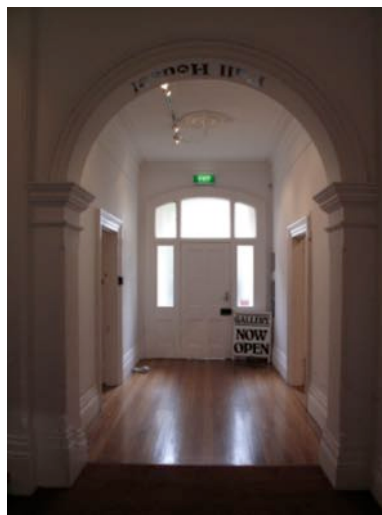


Fig. 12: Poimena Gallery looking through the archway towards the entrance

A prominent architectural feature is an archway located at the entrance of the building that people pass through on their way to the teaching area. The arch is positioned between the two gallery spaces and forms a transition from the gallery space – that frames one particular set of behaviours, into the art making space of the class rooms – where very different behaviours take place; a nexus between a public area (gallery), and private area (of

teaching and learning). As a threshold, the archway was the obvious place to begin my exploration of the Poimena space, and to strive to make a meaningful spatial intervention.

I intended to alert viewers to the interrelations of the separate spaces, institutional, architectural and social, to encourage a reassessment of the spaces' forms and functions. As Lefebvre writes, if space is a product of social relations then it must exist under the organisation as designated by the institution in which the space comes into existence.⁹³ In this context, I sought to create an architectural intervention that would serve to highlight the point of transition from public to private space.

I arrived at Poimena the day before teaching commenced, to get started with the archway installation. The initial task on the archway was to frame up a stud wall to box in the arch, leaving a doorway-sized opening, so that on entry into the gallery space it would look like any other wall in the space. The conceit of this structure, however, was to not fill the cracks where the false wall joined the existing walls, making the structure stand out in relation to the rest of the space. As you walked through the doorway into the classroom area, it became obvious that the wall was merely a façade, as the rear of the work was left uncovered and unfinished.

⁹³ Lefebvre, *op. cit.* p. 85



Fig. 13: *(re)visit*, 2010. Installation view of archway intervention



Fig.14: *(re)visit*, 2010. Installation view of the archway

That week I held three class sessions with each group. Four groups made up a total of forty-two students. Altogether we had ten days to decide on a work and then create it. Given I was making the work with student input, I was very aware of the short space of time they had to absorb the concept of installation, the ideas behind the project and, after they had contributed, my own interpretation of their ideas into a finished work.

The first step in engaging the students in my project was to ask them to draw mental maps of the school grounds and interpret their interaction within the area by privileging the space they had most affinity with, or that felt most important to them. I then asked them to place their nominated area in the centre of their map, and make it larger than the other landmarks. My intention was to engage students by providing an easy starting point to engage with installation and spatial awareness, and for me to see the school through their eyes.

From the students' maps and talking with them about the school and project, the area of most importance, was the quad, common room and locker area. I found out this was a privileged space in the real sense of the word, as it is not until year eleven that students have access to it. This was

the student's social space, where interactions take place between classes and where they would often spend time going to their lockers.

On Monday afternoon I measured the quad and took my own documentation. I decided to make a platform in opposition to the sunken nature of the original and raise it to the height of its surrounding walls (around knee height). The platform was made from unfinished MDF, the legs and frame made from recycled pine stud from previous works, with drill holes, writing and other remaining marks of making from previous projects. There was nothing added to the work in terms of decoration, the only device being the re-orientation of the piece within the room, the work being angled geographically true to the original in relation to the building of Poimena. The space was dimly lit, quiet and peaceful. This was the quad with everything removed, pared back to its basic form, all life stripped from it.



Fig. 15: *(re)visit*, 2010. Installation view

The resolution of the students' twenty-one pieces of work came together on Thursday morning with a large sheet of Perspex. Since considering the students' work as part of the overall installation, I had seen the second gallery space, where it would be housed, as a storeroom of ideas, a repository where you could view the student's work as their interpretation of space. However, I wanted to make the viewer work to gain this knowledge, rather than making it easy to come by. I made an alcove mirroring the passage under the archway and enclosed the students' work behind the

Perspex. The room was very brightly lit (I used all but three of the gallery's lights in here), and full of objects, colour and noise. In essence, this room contained the life I had removed from my representation of the quad. It embodied the students' ideas and their creative potential.



Fig. 16: *(re)visit*. Installation view of the students work

The planning and installation of *(re)visit* (2010) was an experience that gave me a greater knowledge of my own practice and the problems that come from working in situ with a short timeframe. An interesting aspect of the project was the public shared nature of the making process. The collaborative nature of the students' contribution was problematic, also primarily due to the short timeframe. Given more time I feel the integration of their works within the finished piece could have been more refined and inclusive.

In hindsight, a few extra weeks would have made the process less stressful. However, I feel the spontaneity that comes from working within a tight timeframe allows a certain freedom one can often lose sight of when confined to a studio.

Obstruction/wedge: *Bunker Down*

A large wedge shaped object situated within the entrance to the gallery space, *Bunker Down* was my first exploration into re-making a previous work, *Something in the way of things*, developed during this project. Originally made for the Plimsoll gallery for my Honours year submission, *Something in the way of things* was a large inverted wedge, attached flush to the back wall of a 4 x 4 metre gallery space. The wedge tapered to the front of the space and, at its highest point as the viewer entered, it was 2.5 metres high. The object filled the space and compressed the area towards the viewer, acting as a visual and psychological barrier.



Fig. 17: *Something in the way of things...*, 2007. Installation view

The object's orientation within the gallery was such that viewers moved through the space, passing underneath the overhang that created a threatening and ambiguous thoroughfare. The ground directly below the edge of the wedge was highlighted by black and yellow striped safety tape, emphasising the dimensions the object occupied. This added to the impression that the viewer was entering an area that was unsafe or out of bounds and created an awareness of their proximity to the wedge and the space they occupied in relation to it. The use of the tape was in reference to the general climate of fear that permeated the western world after the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York City. Its use also highlighted

the way public spaces had come under greater scrutiny while also linking to both temporary and permanent security structures in the wider built environment. Although not directly relating to these attacks, the tape served as a trope to place this work within the context of the fear of public spaces that was a consequence of the attacks. The carpet was removed from the gallery and the floor painted the same colour as the object and walls, adding another signal to the viewer who entered the installation that they had crossed a threshold. The monochromatic surfaces of this space alluded to it being a part of the surrounding architecture, as gallery walls merged with wedge, the object blended with its surrounds. *Something in the way of things* was an attempt to create a space of uncertainty within the environment of understood and accepted protocols of the contemporary art institution.

Something in the way of things was exhibited once again at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (PICA), where I attempted to present the work in a format and context as close to the original as possible, however this was quite difficult due to the differences between the gallery spaces. Whereas the Plimsoll Gallery in Hobart has fairly low ceilings, moveable wall partitions and carpet floor tiles, PICA's gallery spaces have high ceilings supported by brick and masonry walls with wooden floors. *Something in the way of things* had been originally sited in a thoroughfare, however at PICA the area allocated to the work was in a room separated from the main gallery, along with another artist's work, so, out of courtesy, it couldn't obstruct the flow of movement through the doorway. There was a distinct contrast between the wood of the floors and the white of the walls/object. I struggled with this aspect at first, but ultimately used it to the advantage of the work. Apart from these situational differences, the main shift came from the security tape used to visually isolate the space the object occupied in the Plimsoll Gallery. In the PICA iteration it was only the space underneath the object that was visually isolated by the tape, rather than the overall area the viewer entered as they approached the object. The outcome of this was

to create a greater juxtaposition between object and space that served to highlight the security tape as the defining element within the installation.

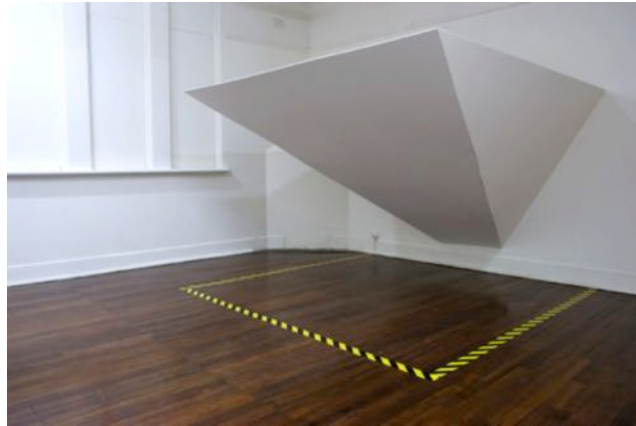


Fig. 18: *Something in the way of things...*, 2008. Installation view PICA

The wedge was a reference to the large objects produced by the Minimalists, most notably Robert Morris and Ronald Bladen. In making this reference, I was wary of emulating the object-ness that was inherent in their work, my intention being to make the wedge blend with its environment as closely as possible. Through its angular form and whiteness the work gestures towards Minimalism, but through its excessive, imposing dimensions it operates as an assault on the authority and utility of the space it operates within.

The next iteration of *Something in the way of things* occurred in 2010 when I revisited the work in a group exhibition at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG) entitled *Lookout*. The exhibition was based on the concept of Tasmanian artists whose practices had the tendency to look beyond the island's shores at a broader picture of the world. I was asked to devise a new work, and after discussion with the curators, Jane Stewart and Michael Edwards, I decided to re-visit the concepts underlying *Something in the way of things*. Taking the gallery space as a starting point for the scale of the work, I thought about how I could reinvent the wedge for a new space, while also developing the concept of the work as it related to the to encompass

my view of how the world had moved on from the 'climate of fear' that permeated the first decade of the twenty-first century. My concept for the new work was to move the wedge from the wall and place it on the ground, using standard building materials and to reference the monolithic *Torqued Ellipse* (1997-2004) works by Richard Serra. I wanted to create an object that was large and overbearing, while also familiar and almost reassuring. To this end the main material used for the cladding of the wedge was Melamine-coated MDF sheets, a moisture resistant particleboard often used in kitchens and bathrooms. The material used distanced the work from its Minimalist origins, while lending it a familiar fibro-beach-shack aesthetic.



Fig. 19: *Bunker Down*, 2010. Installation view

Bunker Down (2010) was sited at the entrance to an exhibition space visible to the viewer at the far end of another space, which meant that as viewers travelled towards it, more of the object was gradually revealed. The wedge was placed in the doorway to direct audience members as they entered the gallery, and to create a visual experience that was spatially and aesthetically challenging. The impact of the work was slightly compromised by various public safety considerations enforced within TMAG, which meant it could not be situated as close to the entrance as I would have liked. Although this compromised my idea of how the work should function, as the gallery space is a public environment with access considerations, the politics at play in

this contested arena was evident and therefore pertinent. On approaching *Bunker Down* the viewer was confronted by something rather like the bow of a ship. Standing at a height of 2.4m the work overhung the viewer as they entered the space. The rear of the wedge was open, so the viewer could see the construction methods used: stud frames joined at an angle at the front, opening to the rear, in a somewhat welcoming gesture. The floor of the open end of the wedge utilised the yellow and black security tape employed in previous works. However, in this iteration, the tape covered the whole of the floor area inside the wedge, rather than just demarcating the edges of a space.



Fig. 20: *Bunker Down*, 2010. Installation view

Following on from the two works previously described (*vice versa* and *(re)visit*), *Bunker Down* continued the experimentation with façades; it presented the appearance of a seemingly solid object, and on circumnavigation, encountered from the rear, revealed itself as an empty shell. This object ostensibly failed as a container, as there was no way of enclosing its contents. Its title suggests that it could be construed as a shelter, however, as it was presented in the gallery space it was unable to offer sanctuary. In contrast to the emptiness of the interior of the work, the security tape made the viewer aware of an area they were not permitted to enter, thus rendering the idea of shelter even less applicable.

Oscar Tuazon's work *Fun* (2011) presents as a blank concrete wall from one side, as viewers traverse around it, what might be expected – three more walls to construct a room, does not materialise. Instead, the viewer is faced with a steel structure that acts as the prop for the wall, holding it vertical and supporting the weight of the concrete like two legs crossed at the knee.⁹⁴ *Fun* is another example of how an artist can extrapolate architectural expectations, but ultimately dispel them, thus invoking a redistribution of the sensible, by subverting the expectation of what the object could be, from one side to the other.



Fig. 21: Oscar Tuazon, *Fun*, 2011. Installation view

Allusions and ideas related to public and private space permeated *Bunker Down*, especially as it stood in an institution, at the nexus of a contradictory space, simultaneously suggesting an object of safety or shelter, whilst spurning the notion of containment by excluding the viewer from its interior space. By subverting the traditional expectation of an architectural object, *Bunker Down* defies an architecturally informed reading: it obstructs as it clears, it invites at the same time as it rejects.

⁹⁴ Gallery Eva Presenhuber. "Press Release: Sculpture Now." edited by Gallery Eva Presenhuber, 10. Zurich: Gallery Eva Presenhuber, 2011. p. 9



Fig. 22: *Bunker Down*, 2010. Installation view

Bunker Down was the first work made for this research project for which I intentionally harnessed such paradoxes as a conceptual element. Whereas previous works adapted and were directly influenced by features of the gallery spaces they occupied, and permitted glimpses of what lay behind them, there was never any question as to where the viewer was able to go. In contrast, *Bunker Down* gave the viewer the choice to view the work from the exterior or from within looking out. Where previous works were made to compel the viewer to engage the work the way I intended, *Bunker Down* gave the viewer agency to engage however they wished.⁹⁵

Bunker Down was conceived and developed outside the gallery space, using only the knowledge of the scale and proposed position in the space to guide the final construction. The work embraced principles arrived at in previous works, such as the flow of movement through thoroughfares, and the presentation of a façade of an object that is the opposite to the interior reality. It expanded upon these ideas, creating additional paradoxes or contradictions, which would then be developed in future works.

⁹⁵ Although sited in the doorway, the work was not as much obstruction as the previous iterations.

Round-a-bout/public: *Establishing Situations: three weeks expanding a site*

This chapter will discuss three iterations of a specific body of work, how the work was developed and how the associated concept became distilled through the process.

The next developments in the project were prompted by a hiatus, and a sense that after three years of researching my topic, it had literally backed me into a corner in terms of what I could make and how it might be contextualized. Given the aims of my project – the construction of situations to subvert familiar modes of architectural construction and norms of spatial engagement, it seemed ironic to be reliant on gallery spaces to create the works: the lack of their availability meant that the practice-based aspect of the project had ground to a halt. Having focused on the theoretical aspect of the project for a period of time, I felt inspired to create a new work that manifested feelings of inadequacy and to directly address the sense of ‘being backed into a corner’. This idea was fuelled by my desire to confront and transform this creative block. My proposed solution was to perform a durational work where I exorcised the art theory I felt was weighing me down; a perverse and cathartic expression of my desire to be free.

An opportunity arose to act on this idea when I received a call for expressions of interest for an exhibition in Entrepôt Gallery. The show was entitled *Mayhem* (2011) and requested individuals or groups of artists to respond to the notion of ‘may-hem’ through installation, mixed media and/or performance. The artists chosen were then invited to activate the main gallery of Entrepôt for one day only. This seemed the perfect opportunity to experiment with the idea of building myself into a corner, which became the title of the work, and test the potential for reading directly from theoretical texts as a performative piece.

In devising the work, it was important for me to consider forms that already existed within the gallery environment, such as plinths, and to create a corner that looked as if it belonged to the space it was in. Essentially this project was about manifesting the theoretical research I had conducted, and getting it out of my head and into a shared space. With this in mind, I set up a webcam to record and stream the performance on the internet, so the work would exist in another extended platform outside of the gallery space. This work was about sharing the knowledge I had accumulated with a broader group of people, although as I discovered afterwards, some viewers interpreted the work quite differently.

In discussion with colleagues after the performance, they interpreted the act of reading out aloud as similar to that of a person on their soapbox, preaching the gospel. There is definitely precedence for this interpretation in regards to the staunchness of critics such as Clement Greenberg, however I had not anticipated this particular reading of the performance. What I intended the work to be, an impassive reading of theory, was interpreted as a diatribe.



Fig. 23: *Building myself into a corner*, 2011. Installation view

To replicate forms commonly found in exhibition contexts I used a plinth to locate the monitor that was recording me from within the corner, mirroring

the form of the corner I inhabited. Also in the corner, on the wall, I attached a shelf for holding the books and texts I would read during the course of the performance. The floor space within the corner was just enough for a chair and over the course of the day, I eventually ended up standing on the chair, so I could move and keep warm. I wanted to stay in the space for the duration of the gallery opening times, six hours in total. As my view of the gallery was blocked, I ended up performing to the camera, not knowing if anyone had logged onto the online feed. This was partly motivated by the need to keep moving (and stay warm) and also due to my awareness of the camera recording the performance.

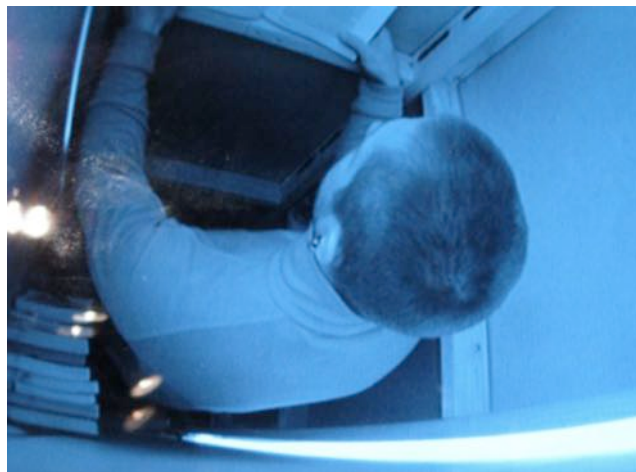


Fig. 24: *Building myself into a corner*, 2011. Still from streamed performance

As the viewer entered the gallery, all they could hear was my voice coming from the corner and apparently, despite the clues of the monitor showing a real-time moving image, some people who entered the space didn't realise I was in there. Over the course of the day my voice became softer and as I exited the corner, it was really very difficult to speak. This was the second durational performance undertaken during this project, following *Prize Fighter* (performed at Inflight as part of the *vice versa* installation). The motivation behind these actions was to explore the similarities between the researching of architectural space with the physicality of actually being immersed within that space. During this period I started to recognise the

importance of placing myself within the work: I realised that my project was not only about public space, but concerned with a personal experience and knowledge of that space.

A fortnight after this performance, I commenced installing an exhibition in Kelly's Garden, commissioned by Salamanca Arts Centre (SAC), curated by Sean Kelly. Sean asked me to devise a work that referenced the public nature of the garden and was interested in how performance could be contextualised within the space. Following *Building myself into a corner* at Entrepôt, I wanted to extend on that work, but make it more inviting for an audience who might not normally engage with contemporary art and especially esoteric art theory. I expressed to Sean that I wanted to undertake another durational work, for a longer period of time, so the outcome/experience would have time to evolve and become a literal manifestation of the theory I had engaged with.

Establishing Situations: three weeks expanding a site (2011) incorporated me reading texts from my own research, as in *Building myself into a corner*, as well as writings provided by my peers which had influenced their artistic practice. During the morning I would read from these texts and in the afternoon I built a structure influenced by the texts I had read. I recorded, documented and streamed live via webcam to my website, jackrobins.com, so that people who were not able to physically attend Kelly's Garden could still engage with the process of the work. With this work I was attempting to bring esoteric theory to a wider audience, while also confronting my own personal history with texts that have been both inspiration and block to my own practice.

It was important for me to commence with a physical foundation of sorts, so I built a grid as a starting point before the opening of the show. I had never constructed a work without a preliminary plan, so I was very nervous about the outcome. Knowing this work would evolve throughout the course of the

three weeks and was contingent on the texts I was given, I became very unsure about how the work would proceed. The material I planned to use was, once again, plain pine framing timber, the same material I had used in previous works.



Fig. 25: *Establishing Situations: three weeks expanding a site*, 2011. Installation view of the initial foundation

Something I hadn't planned for, and could not control, was the weather.⁹⁶ The first week I was 'rained out', and only able to engage with the work for an hour each day due to gale force winds and torrential rain.

During the course of the work, I read from seventeen texts, ranging from French spatial and political theory through to a guide on the psychological aspects of training for rock climbing. The structure built over this period was a geometric form based on the grid of the foundation I began with. The basis of the construction was box-like forms rising from the grid that were informed by the reading of the texts by Donald Judd and Robert Morris. There was a reciprocal symmetry during the second week between what I read in the morning and what I made in the afternoon, as if I were reading an object into existence; the 'literal manifestation of theory' mentioned earlier.

⁹⁶ I would recommend not undertaking an outside, durational, performative installation in the middle of a Hobart winter. The first week of the project the temperature averaged thirteen degrees, with driving rain and wind speeds above thirty kilometres an hour.



Fig. 26: *Establishing Situations*, 2011. Installation view after the first week



Fig. 27: *Establishing Situations*, 2011. Installation view after the second week



Fig. 28: *Establishing Situations*, 2011. Installation view of the finished work



Fig. 29: *Establishing Situations*, 2011. Still from performance

In terms of the entirety of the project, *Establishing Situations* is visually distinct from the other works produced during my candidature due to the randomness of the processes used in its creation. Despite this, many aspects of the work informed the continuation of the overall project in important ways. This work enabled me to exorcise the artistic block that had stymied the progress of the practical aspect of the project, while also reinforcing the modes of construction and theorisation of the spatial that had manifested in previous works.

Not long after *Establishing Situations* had been de-installed, I was invited to participate in a group exhibition, *Something Nowhere* (2011), to be held in Launceston at the School of Visual and Performing Arts (SVPA) and curated by Marie Sierra and Sean Kelly. The exhibition brought together artists who worked within a spatial practice and sought to highlight how these artists negotiated the notion of site-related work and its subsequent display away from the site it was originally created for. Due to the large amount of documentation I had taken during the course of *Establishing Situations*, I

began to consider how my work could function as an archive of an action in relation to the performative aspect as well as the built structure. In tightening my thesis topic and considering what would be shown at the conclusion of the project for my final exhibition and examination, this exhibition galvanised my thinking. In considering the works made during the project in the same way I had approached the readymade quality of the works appropriated, it opened up those previous works in a way I had not considered.

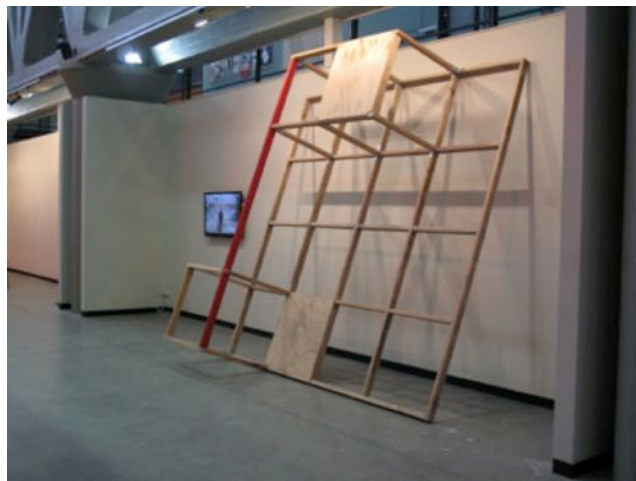


Fig. 30: *Established Situation*, 2011. Installation view

Entitled *Established Situation* (2011), this work comprised the partly completed structure made during the previous work, propped up at an angle, against the gallery wall. Next to the structure, a flat screen monitor played the edited recordings of the readings performed. The leaning structure was the foundation grid with several cubes extending out from its base. It measured three by three metres and referenced the appearance of a large modular Sol Lewitt work that had been discarded and found after many years ‘sitting in the elements’. The aesthetic of the work maintained and developed connections a number of the works previously made for this project have had with the Minimalist structure.

In contrast to the previous works, here there was no direct link between the construction and the space in which it was exhibited; a marked shift, as up till this point in my project, the works were influenced by, and related directly to specific spaces. Alternatively this work placed great importance on the documentation I had been making of previous works, and led me to reflect on the possibilities for incorporating documentary data to create new and diverse forms. This aspect of the project that began with *Building myself into a corner* was a crucial step in realising the concluding works of my project.

Pathway/obstruction/corridor/round-a-bout: *Bottleneck*

The final work produced as part of this research project was *Bottleneck*, a transition piece that bridged the main body of practice-led research and the final submission. *Bottleneck* brought together the lines of questioning that arose during the course of my project, and readdressed the aesthetic of architectural uncertainty that formed the basis of all the previous works' investigations. Part art object, architectural intervention, safety barrier, obstruction, the visual clues as to how this work functioned and how it was read were ambiguous. These points of contention undermined the way the space was understood in relation to function, negotiation and design, and lead to an uncertainty of encounter. The paradoxical nature of these visual clues will be addressed in this section.

Early in 2012 I applied to participate in *The Research Life of Arts Objects*, an exhibition facilitated by Paul Zika in Entrepôt Gallery; an annex to the major component of an exhibition at the main campus of the university. Conceived by Professors Adrian Franklin and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, the exhibition was funded by a Community Engagement Grant to showcase the research of the Arts Faculty via the objects that feature in the research of various projects/disciplines. I was one of three artists to take part in the Entrepôt portion of the exhibition; the others were Nancy Mauro-Flude, a

performance and new-media artist, and Greer Honeywill, another sculptor. As we are artists with primarily object-based practices, it was decided we would display an artwork associated with the object of inspiration. Through discussing where we wanted to show our works, we decided I would take the entrance area of the gallery, Nancy would exhibit in the back area and Greer in the window.

The object I chose as the stimulus for *Bottleneck* (2012) was the bollard, the ubiquitous safety object of the street. I had previously used bollards as the basis for a work made during my honours year in 2007. To my eye the repetition or seriality of bollards spreads throughout the urban environment and the fact they are made from industrial materials, gives them an automatic minimalist reading; the translation of this into an artwork addressing safety within the urban sphere was perhaps an obvious step for me to take.⁹⁷



Fig. 1: *publicsecure*, 2007. Installation view

⁹⁷ The work *publicsecure* (2007) was made from a group of cardboard tubes painted white, with black and yellow tape around the circumference at the top of the tube, to signify security tape. They were fragile objects, not cemented into the ground and would fall at the slightest bump. These objects were designed to undermine the functionality of the bollard, and by being displayed as art objects, they subverted the solidity and monumentality of the minimalist object.

Taking the bollard as the impetus for *Bottleneck*, I devised a set of walls that divided the space of the gallery into two, with a narrow path through the work. On the floor of the entrance to the pathway was the black and yellow security tape used in previous works. The intention was to employ the concept of the bollard as a crowd control device and undermine this by producing a bottleneck within the gallery space, so the work would operate as a mechanism for disrupting the smooth flow of movement.



Fig. 2: *Bottleneck*, 2012. Installation view

To heighten the confusion, I used MDF sheets to clad parts of the walls of the pathway. The cladding was used in such a way that there was never a true sense of being inside or outside of the work. For example, the first section of the wall was left unclad, to allow a view through to other artworks in the space, indicating the possibility of thoroughfare into the windowed section of the gallery. I constructed this section of wall with the noggins set wide apart so as to allow viewers the choice of moving through the wall, or to negotiate the pathway. As the viewer entered the pathway however, the cladding was on the outside of the wall with the studwork closest to their position, giving the impression of being behind the work, in a 'back-of-

house' type space (this impression was heightened by the security tape underfoot in this area); an effect carried through the rest of the path, since as the viewer turned a corner, they were again confronted by studwork on one side and a half clad wall on the other. Left unclad the walls maintained the illusion of being both on the inside and outside of the work.



Fig. 3: *Bottleneck*, 2012. Installation view

As the final work completed prior to submission, *Bottleneck* articulates the propositions that are at the heart of this project. Standing outside the work, the viewer was able to take in all of it at the same time, as one would an object. Yet concurrently they were offered a choice as to how they would engage with the space that was encompassed by the work, as with an architectural device. On entering the work, the clues as to what the viewer was engaging with were uncertain; it was unclear where the work began and ended; whether the whole gallery was implicated in the work, or whether it comprised the demarcated area taken up by the footprint of the walls of the work. The puzzling nature of security tape used as an aesthetic device led to the uncertainty of whether the viewer was within a public or a private

space of the work. The unclad walls and bare studwork, symbolising exterior and interior of the work at the same time, was contrary to the clear pathway through and defined by the work. The spatial paradoxes that arose from *Bottleneck*'s layout and materiality contributed to a redistribution of the sensible by addressing Lefebvre's triad of social spaces. *Bottleneck* addressed the 'perceived space' via its orientation within the gallery, creating a space between two works, leading to the possibility of interaction taking place; it addressed the 'conceived space' in so far as it was logically placed within the space to perform a specific function, the creation of an uncertain spatiality; and it addressed the 'lived space' by making common spatial signs ambiguous, such as interior and exterior spaces acting at the same time in an area.



Fig. 4: *Bottleneck*, 2012. Installation view

The Final Exhibition

The exhibition for assessment comprised a sculptural environment, presented alongside documentation of the works made for this research project. The flow of the space of the installation demonstrated a retranslation and imaging of the suite of materials used throughout the earlier works. This reconfiguration addresses Doreen Massey's 'simultaneity of stories-so-far', where space is a product of relations-between and always under construction.⁹⁸ By redisplaying the suite of materials together, in a way that recalled the earlier installations, the works made for the final exhibition created a space for engaging and understanding the previous investigations.

All of the works made during the course of this project are represented by documentation of their original manifestations in situ, and as materially reconfigured states constructed from the physical materials of the original works. The documentation took the form of images, video projection and as sound permeating the space. In this rendition the materials, including pine-framing timber and MDF sheets were recycled. Used as props, they formed a new work determined in response to the particularities of the Plimsoll Gallery, and were intended to configure a contingent space within that setting.

On entering the gallery the viewer was confronted by a dark, enclosed space which operated as a threshold that framed and introduced the gallery space; devoid of lighting, labels or artworks, it was an 'empty' white cube. Typical gallery cues were present at the entrance to this 'cube' – signage, title and abstract – signalling to the viewer that though they entered an empty space, it was the start of an exhibition. Light spilled through a gap to the right hand side of the space. The light framed and directed the viewer whilst guiding them into the deeper recesses of the exhibition space. The

⁹⁸ Massey, *op.cit.*, p. 9

entrance to the exhibition served as an introduction, at once dramatic for the lack of light or objects but at the same time underwhelming and possibly disappointing. These paradoxes gave rise to a redistribution of the sensible, a new and different way of entering and initial engagement with an exhibition.

The gap in the wall was wide enough for viewers to pass through if they manoeuvred sideways, constricting and manipulating the way a person may enter into the next space of the exhibition. Whilst this is a limiting entrance to an exhibition space, it was conceived as a way of utilising the wall panels of the gallery in a configuration that compelled the viewer to engage with the space. As they moved towards the gap, an image on the floor, tentatively propped against the gallery wall in a pool of light, came into their line of sight. The image they encountered was of the work *GRID 55*. Block mounted on MDF board, the image took on an object-like status and hovered between an extension of the actual space, an illusion, and a model.

Around the corner, away from the image, stood a large dividing wall, composed of the foundation sections of the timber grid used in the work *Establishing Situations* and the cladding from *Bunker Down*. Propped against the gallery bulkhead and held in place by vice-grips, it read as an ephemeral structure that supports, whilst being supported, in an unconvincing way.⁹⁹ As a temporary divide between gallery spaces, this wall operated as another threshold for the viewers to traverse, between the darkened, low-ceilinged spaces into the high-ceilinged, well-lit space where the major work, *Constructed Situation*, was sited. To the left of the temporary wall, the video of *Prize-fighter* was projected into an alcove, smaller than in the original installation. The moving image recedes into the back of the projection space, suggesting a memory of an original action, an historical action that has taken place within the space of the project that references the 'representational space' of Lefebvre.

⁹⁹ This is a building method employed to temporarily site a wall, to assess its placement.

The main work in the ‘tall gallery’ space, *Constructed Situation*, was also comprised of the pine-framing timber used in previous works. Leaning against the wall in the centre of the space, the numerous timber lengths obstructed circumnavigation of the gallery space. Constructed to simulate an exaggerated suite of props for the central gallery wall, this work was intended to suggest the instability of the physical institution. *Constructed Situation* then operated as an antithesis of the Minimalist object; contingent and extrovert it challenges the ordered repetition of Donald Judd’s ‘one thing after another’.¹⁰⁰ The abstracted quality of *Constructed Situation* took its visual cues from a collapsed, malformed stud-wall, suggesting a Modernism in an unconvincing state of ruin.

Throughout this space the sound of the readings recorded during the *Established Situations* performance could be heard; theoretical texts that describe such diverse topics as the status of space, aesthetics, how to make the perfect cup of tea and the psychology behind performance rock-climbing. These audible theoretical elements framed viewers’ experiences of the documentation located in the final space of the submission that contained images of seven works made during the course of this project. These were hung evenly spaced in a straight line, at the standard gallery height of fifteen hundred millimetres from the ground, to the centre of the images.¹⁰¹ The standardised display of these images suggested compliance with the gallery-as-institution and served as a gesture that duly acknowledges documentation as the surviving vestige of installation and site-responsive traces of the recent past. Hung in this typical gallery space, this documented display of the works presented the history of the project standardised, as a subversion of the project’s critique of the institution. Here it is paradoxically displayed as a critique of the project’s internal logic. This paradox emulates the contradiction of the late modernist artists’ desire to

¹⁰⁰ Judd, *Specific Objects*, op.cit., p. 827

¹⁰¹ This is the eye level of the average individual and is the standard measurement used to hang images throughout galleries and museums.

remove themselves from the gallery's systems of display, by siting their work in a space separate from the gallery. The contradiction lies in the subsequent display and sale of documentation from these off-site constructions and ephemeral works that was inevitable due to the need to exhibit what had been constructed.

The final installation constructed for this project encompassed the research undertaken over the past four years. In addressing the gallery space and the architecture that supports it, I utilised the spatial knowledge, devices, experiences and cues gained through this research. For example, 'line of sight' was used in *vice versa* to draw the viewer into and through a constricted space. At the entrance to the gallery for the final exhibition, line of sight was also employed as a device to indicate the path through to the main exhibition space. The materials used were reconfigured and distributed to form a chronological path for the viewer to experience the unfolding of the project. From constrictive space at the entrance to the traditional gallery display of images, the candidature

Through the materials used to create the previous works in tandem with their documentation, *Constructed Situation* combined the concepts explored throughout this research project, contributing an alternative way of understanding contemporary spatial practice that inhabits the space between art and architecture.

Part Three: Conclusion

This project has examined consistent themes of the art of the late-modernist period, such as the dematerialisation of the art object and the use of the institution as material for critique. These tropes have been re-visited using the notion of the readymade, to inform a contemporary spatial practice. The archetypal works appropriated as readymades, were selected for what they achieved in their time, and their immediately recognisable iconic aesthetic. For example, *GRID 55* was a direct reference to Sol Lewitt's modular structures; *vice versa* used Nauman's *Performance Corridor* (1969) as a readymade; and *Bunker Down* referenced Richard Serra's monolithic structures. These works were then used as readymades and starting points for explorations of the redistribution of the sensible.

By using the political principles of Jacques Rancière to theorise the paradoxical nature of contemporary spatial practice, this research project has contributed an alternate reading of the historical rupture that occurred during the late 1960s and '70s art world. Through this re-evaluation, the use of paradox and difference to create a redistribution of the sensible has been identified as a recognisable tactic used in contemporary works. This is evident in various forms; in Monica Sosnowska's use of known construction methods, and materials (sensible), and the subversion of this vernacular architecture via crushing, or draping (redistribution); and in the work of Oscar Tuazon, whose use of common building materials, and their known properties, are pushed beyond their engineered capacity. This tactic was utilised throughout the project works with a focus on redistributing the known, or sensible, expectations of the space, or object. This was particularly evident in *vice versa*, where the viewer's expected movement through the gallery corridor, clear flow to a destination, was obstructed by the significant tapering of the walls, and an abrupt end to the corridor; and in *Bunker Down*, where the expected convention of a doorway, was

redistributed via the placement of the wedge close to the exhibition entrance, unexpectedly diverting the viewers movement.

Key architectural devices were utilised throughout the project as a vehicle for spatial interrogation. Inherent in architectural vernacular, the devices of threshold, corridor, pathway and obstruction, were systematically experimented with through a series of art works in order to clarify how these devices could be used to manipulate the viewer. The decreasing space of the pathway through *GRID 55* and tapered corridor of *vice versa* led the viewer to become more aware of the space they encompassed in relation to the installation. These works followed Daniel Buren's in situ mode of working, and Michael Asher's use of the material inherent within the space the works occupied. As the first works produced during the candidature, these works experimented with methods of production that became more refined as the project progressed.

Objects and installations were constructed to inhibit or enhance either the movement of the viewer or the architectural fabric of the gallery space. This emphasised and/or obstructed specific architectural elements, exposed and challenged the spaces in which they were situated, and created interventions that abstracted these common spatial devices. The findings accumulated throughout these spatial experimentations highlighted the relationship between viewer, object and space.

A visual language was developed that emphasised how the gallery and artwork exist in a reciprocal space in relation to the viewer. The impact upon the institution of the gallery space was to highlight the ways in which art is displayed according to a set of principles. Just as Institutional Critique in the 1970s highlighted the structures inherent within the gallery environment, the works produced during this candidature have shown that these structures can be used as a material in the making of experiential art. Rancière's notion of the distribution of the sensible has led this project to

highlight these devices by isolating them from the situations they are commonly found. This has led to a spatial language that is informed by the vernacular qualities of construction sites and spaces in transition.

Throughout this process of re-evaluation, a formula and set of aesthetic principles developed: an iconic work in readymade form, and an architectural device were paired to interrogate a space and its conventions. In creating this predictable and methodical procedure, it could be considered that I had created a distribution of the sensible for myself. It was at this point, the project then came to a standstill, a point of crisis. Upon reflection, it is evident that by redistributing the sensible, I had created a set of rules that were constricting the project. The performative element that emerged can then be understood as an attempt to break away from this formula and further disrupt the principles that I had put in place. *Building Myself Into a Corner* was the first example of this, which would become a strategy and pivotal element of future works. Feeling constrained by the theory I had been reading, led me to literally build myself into a corner and perform this theory.

The key turning points of the project have come through the creation of the artworks, with each successive work informed by the work before it. Whilst at the beginning of this project I was expecting the outcomes to be external to myself, as it progressed, I became a central figure within the works. The performative element became important as a cathartic act of release. By participating in and implicating myself in the works, I addressed the idea that theory can become a literal material in the making of art and that the interpretation of that theory is reliant on the individual's own experiences.

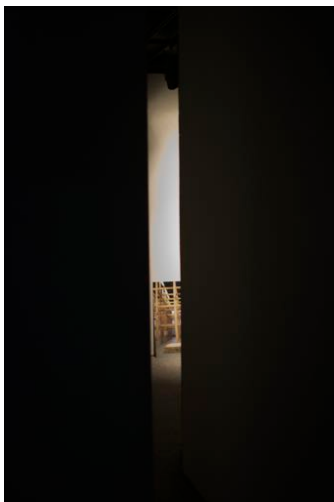
Through their vernacular materials and structures, the assembled environments addressed the built spaces of homes, offices and institutions. Their air of familiarity led the viewer to engage with the spaces, either through art historical references, or through an understanding of the means

and materials of construction, or both. The objects and environments speak of the fabric of the everyday, without being didactic in their expression. Each viewer will come to, and leave the work with a different history and understanding of space and spatial practice.

Appendices

Appendix One: Images of Final Submission

All images are installation photos by the author.







Appendix Two: Bibliography

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Appendix Three: List of illustrations

Part One: Outline and Central Argument

- Figure 1 Richard Serra, *Tilted Arc*, 1981-89, Cor-ten steel, 3600 x 350 x 5 cm. Installation view, Foley Federal Plaza, New York. Downloaded from: http://classconnection.s3.amazonaws.com/471/flashcards/172471/jpg/week_16_5-11-111305807846153.jpg
- Figure 2 Michael Asher, *Claire Copley Gallery, Los Angeles, California, September 21-October 12, 1974*, 1974, 2100 x 450 x 340 cm. Installation view, Claire Copley Gallery, Los Angeles. Downloaded from: <http://grupak.tumblr.com/image/33692617522>
- Figure 3 Jackson Pollock, *Full Fathom Five*, 1947. Oil on canvas, nails, tacks, buttons, key, coins, cigarettes, matches, 129.2 x 76.5 cm. Collection of MoMA, New York. Downloaded from: http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=79070
- Figure 4 Oscar Tuazon, *Untitled*, 2010, mixed media. Installation views, Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland. Downloaded from: http://www.contemporaryartdaily.com/2010/03/oscar-tuazon-at-kunsthalle-bern/oscar_tuazon_14_copyright_dominique_uldry/
- Figure 5: Rem Koolhaas and Ole Scheeren, *CCTV Building*, Beijing, 2004-08. Photograph by Frederic J Brown/AFP/Getty Images. Downloaded from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2012/may/18/constructive-criticism-architecture-landmark-trust>
- Figure 6: Frank Gehry, *Guggenheim Museum*, Bilbao, 1991-97. Downloaded from: the blog *I Art* by Marie-Agathe Simonetti. http://iartindex.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/img_0890.jpg
- Figure 7 Oscar Tuazon, *Bend it Till it Breaks*, 2009, wood, metal, concrete. Installation view, Centre International d'Art et du Paysage de l'Île de Vassivière, France. Downloaded from: http://www.annualartmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/galleries_OscarTuazon-vassiviere4.jpg

- Figure 8 Oscar Tuazon, *Dead Wrong*, 2011, mixed media. Installation view, The Power Station, Dallas. Downloaded from: <http://pastelegram.org/reviews/48>
- Figure 9 Monika Sosnowska, *The Staircase*, 2010-12, mixed media. Installation view, K21, Düsseldorf. Downloaded from: http://24.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_lszy6xSH1qdu9cto1_500.jpg
- Figure 10 Monika Sosnowska, *1:1*, 2007, mixed media. Installation view, Polish Pavilion, Venice Biennale. Downloaded from: <http://arttattler.com/archivehugobossshortlist2012.html>
- Figure 11 Monika Sosnowska, *Untitled*, 2004, mixed media. Installation view, Serpentine Gallery, London. Downloaded from: http://www.recirca.com/cgi-bin/mysql/show_item.cgi?post_id=1852&type=reviews
- Figure 12 Elmgreen & Dragset, *Powerless Structures, Fig 159*, 2001, wood, aluminium, plastic, acrylic paint, 125 x 175 x 85 cm. Image courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris. Downloaded from: http://www.perrotin.com/Elmgreen_et_Dragset-works-oeuvres-18387-32.html
- Figure 13 Elmgreen & Dragset, *Powerless Structures, Fig. 184*, 2001, wood, stencilled lettering, Styrofoam balls, 120 x 120 x 120 cm. Image courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris. Downloaded from: http://www.perrotin.com/Elmgreen_et_Dragset-works-oeuvres-18389-32.html
- Figure 14 Elmgreen & Dragset, *Powerless Structures, Fig. 187*, 2002, wood, stencilled lettering, platter board, 80 x 140 x 150 cm. Image courtesy of Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris. Downloaded from: http://www.perrotin.com/Elmgreen_et_Dragset-works-oeuvres-18391-32.html
- Figure 15 Elmgreen and Dragset, *Tilted Wall - Powerless Strucutre, Fig.150*, 2001, MDF, wood, paint, exit sign, 245 x 390 x 138 cm. Installation view courtesy, Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong & Paris

Figure 16 Fig. 4: Elmgreen and Dragset, *Dug Down Gallery - Powerless Structures*, Fig. 45, 1998, Wood, epoxy paint, halogen spots, table, chair, 300 x 500 x 225 cm. Installation view, Reykjavik, Iceland. Downloaded from: http://www.perrotin.com/Elmgreen_et_Dragset-works-oeuvres-17881-32.html

Part Two: Structural Situations, the body of work

All images without an artist's name are by the author.

Figure 1: *Something in the way of things...*, 2007, pine framing timber, MDF, security tape, 400 x 400 x 290 cm. Installation view, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart

Figures 2-5: *GRID 55*, 2009, pine-framing timber, motion detection CCTV, dimensions variable. Installation view, Entrepôt Gallery, Hobart

Figure 6: The plans of 6a Gallery overlaid on the plans of Inflight. Working drawing.

Figure 7: *vice versa*, 2009, MDF, pine-framing timber, work lights, documentation from durational performance, dimensions variable. Installation view, Inflight Gallery, Hobart

Figure 8: Bruce Nauman, *Green Light Corridor*, 1970. Painted wallboard and fluorescent light fixtures with green lamps, dimensions variable. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Panza Collection. Photo © Giorgio Colombo, Milano. Downloaded from: <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/show-full/piece/?object=92.4171&search=&page=&f=Title> Installation view

Figure 9: *vice versa*, 2009, MDF, pine-framing timber, work lights, documentation from durational performance, dimensions variable. Installation view, Inflight Gallery, Hobart

Figure 10: *Prize-fighter*, 2009, single channel projection. Installation view in *vice versa*, 2009, MDF, pine-framing timber, work lights, documentation from durational performance, dimensions variable. Installation view, Inflight Gallery, Hobart

- Figure 11: Vito Acconci, *Seedbed*, 1972. Still from Super 8 film transferred to video (color, silent), 10 min. Gift of the Julia Stoschek Foundation, Düsseldorf and Committee on Media Funds. © 2013 Vito Acconci. Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York. Downloaded from: http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=109933
- Figures 12-16: *(re)visit*, 2010, pine-framing timber, MDF, mixed media, dimensions variable. Installation views, Poimena Gallery, Launceston
- Figure 17: *Something in the way of things...*, 2007, pine-framing timber, MDF, security tape, 400 x 400 x 290 cm. Installation view, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart
- Figure 18: *Something in the way of things...*, 2007, pine-framing timber, MDF, security tape, 400 x 400 x 290 cm. Installation view, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth
- Figure 19-20: *Bunker Down*, 2010, pine-framing timber, melamine coated MDF, security tape, 600 x 480 x 240 cm. Installation view, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
- Figure 21: Oscar Tuazon, *Fun*, 2011, concrete, steel, 200 x 300 x 200 cm. Installation view, Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zurich. Downloaded from: http://www.art-it.asia/u/admin_expht/CMqJSOewkh4IFg329pdY/?lang=ja
- Figure 22: *Bunker Down*, 2010, pine-framing timber, melamine coated MDF, security tape, 600 x 480 x 240 cm. Installation view, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
- Figures 23-24: *Building myself into a corner*, 2011, mixed media, dimensions variable. Installation view comprising stills from a six-hour performance, Entrepôt Gallery, Hobart
- Figures 25-29: *Establishing Situations: three weeks expanding a site*, 2011, pine framing timber, books, dimensions variable. Installation view comprising stills from performance, Kelly's Garden, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart
- Figure 30: *Established Situation*, 2011, pine-framing timber, plywood, video monitor, dimension variable. Installation view, Academy Gallery, Launceston

Part Three: Conclusion

Figure 1: *publicsecure*, 2007, cardboard, tape, paint, dimensions variable. Installation view, Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart

Figure 2-4: *Bottleneck*, 2012, pine-framing timber, MDF, security tape, dimensions variable. Installation view, Entrepôt gallery, Hobart

Appendix Four: Curriculum Vitae

JACK ROBINS

Personal

Born Canberra 1976

Moved to Tasmania 2005

Education

2008 – 2015	PhD candidate at Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania
2007	Bachelor of Fine Arts (First Class Honours) Tasmanian School of Art, University of Tasmania
2001	RMIT, Melbourne <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three years Gold and Silver Smithing

Solo Exhibitions

2011	<i>Establishing Situations: three weeks expanding a site</i> , Kelly's Garden, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart
2010	<i>(re)visit</i> , Poimena Gallery, Launceston
2009	<i>Vice versa</i> , Inflight A.R.I., North Hobart
2009	<i>Grid 55</i> , Entrepot Gallery, Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart

Selected Group Exhibitions

2012	<i>The Research Life of Objects</i> , Entrepôt Gallery, Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart
2011	<i>Panoply</i> , Sawtooth Gallery, Launceston

2010	<i>Lookout</i> , Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart
2009	<i>Real Good Drawer</i> , 6A ARI, North Hobart
2008	<i>Structural Displacement</i> , 6A ARI, North Hobart
2008	<i>Welcome – Warning</i> , Sidespace Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, Hobart
2008	<i>Hatched</i> , Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth
2007	<i>3 Ways of Being</i> , Entrepot Gallery, Tasmanian School of Art, Hobart
2006	<i>Peripheral Village</i> , CAST Gallery, Hobart

Exhibitions Curated

2008	<i>Companion Planting</i> , CAST Gallery, Hobart
2006	<i>Peripheral Village</i> , CAST Gallery, Hobart
2006	<i>Inside/Outside</i> Waterside Pavilion Mawson's Place, Hobart

Prizes & Residencies

2010	Artist in Residence, Poimena Gallery
2008	CAST Curatorial Mentorship Program

Published Writing

2010	Review for <i>Laughter</i> curated by Victor Medrano at CAST Gallery, Artlink, Vol 30 # 4, pg. 86. ISSN: 0727-1239
2009	<i>Jack Robins on Callan Morgan's Untitled</i> , 2009 for 'Some Text Missing' exhibition catalogue CAST Gallery, Hobart, ISBN: 0947335722
2008	<i>Artnotes</i> for 'Art Monthly Australia' Issues 212-214
2008	<i>Companion Planting</i> for 'Companion Planting' exhibition catalogue CAST Gallery, Hobart, ISBN: 094733565X

2006 *Peripheral Village* for 'Peripheral Village' exhibition
catalogue CAST Gallery, Hobart, ISBN: 0947335501

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2008 *State of Play*, Hatched 08: National Graduate Show, The
Weekend Australian Review, May 3-4, pp. 18-19, TED
SNELL

2008 *Companion Planting*, Artlink, Vol 28 No 3, September,
pg. 86, BRYONY NAINBY